Ben is Dead

USA $3.50 / Canada $5.00

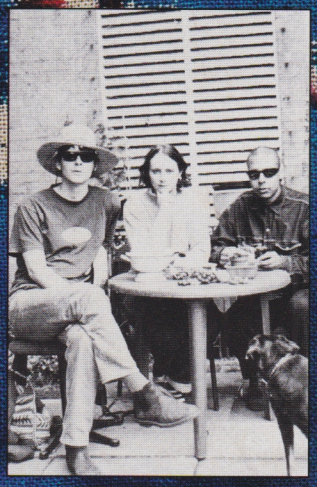
Issue Number 28

BEN-TIME STORIES

28
7 25274 82500 4

the Josephine Wiggs Experience

Bon Bon Lifestyle



Their debut album
for Grand Royal...
wry, romantic, in search
of the life of leisure.

po box 26689 los angeles, ca 90026 • www.grandroyal.com

GRAND ROYAL

LUNACHICKS

Pretty Ugly

IN STORES FEB. 18

AVAILABLE ON CD, LP AND CS

14 NEW SONGS

PRODUCED BY FAT MIKE OF NOFX AND RYAN GREENE.

INCLUDES SONGS: "DON'T WANT YOU", "MR. LADY" AND "THE DAY SQUID'S GERBIL DIED"

go Kart Records

GO-KART PO BOX 20 PRINCE ST. STATION NEW YORK, NY 10012

PHONE 212-673-3380 • E-MAIL GokartRec@aol.com • http://members.aol.com/gokartrec/homepage.html

MAILORDER PRICES: CD-$10, • LP-$8, • CS-$8

Ben Is Dead Supplies

#27 • RETRO HELL 3 (6/96)
Final of the three part retro hell series. Interviews with Malcolm McLaren, Terence McKenna, The Judy Blume slumber party, the history of retro, our favorite retro scandals, Music Concret, the longest editorial in the history of editorials, Hollywood Squatter Tips, plus the 2nd half of the insane retro hell A-Z (M-Z). More. Cover by Jon Salenger. Big. 156 pgs.

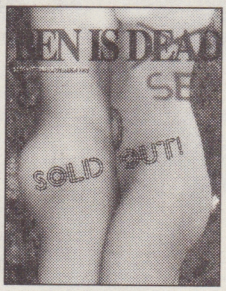
#26 • RETRO HELL 2 (12/95)
Included is the 1st portion of our detailed A-Z guide to Retro Hell (R.H. being the period in which our writers grew up in [70s-80s]). Personal stories and pop culture. Also Weird Al, Mondo Video and kiddie records, 8-tracks & UFOs, music, t-shirt transfers with dad, and too much more to really explain. Cover by John Eder. 156 pgs.

#25 • RETRO HELL 1 (4/95)
Mostly features personal stories of youth. Articles include: Pac Man Fever, My Life is a Soundtrack, a hairdo, an idol; SLAM! (paper games), hand games, Prog Rock, Kiddie Records by Don Bolles, Ron Athey's "Gifts of the Spirit," Waltz Music... Interviews w/ Tom Jones, Anton LaVey (prt 2), Johnny Lydon, Debbie Harry, the Cowboy. Plus how to make bubblegum wrapper belts for christ sakes! 148 pgs.

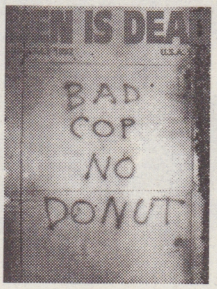
#24 • BLACK ISSUE (8/94)
Also know as the "Death" Issue. Dark, depressive, and a real fun read. Psychic death, pet death, scenester death, mental health, nursing homes. Interviews w/ Keiji Haino, Aes-Nihil, Boyd Rice, Anton LaVey, & more. Plus the exclusive Jack Kevorkian centerfold. Cover by Justin Forbes. 156 pgs.

#23 • SASSY ISSUE (3/94)
What *Sassy* (and *Dirt*) Magazines would have looked like if we made them. Girl zines, Curly hair, vagina crust, eyebrows, TV Rockers, Grunge Prostitutes, Drug Quiz, 7" mania... Stupid guy tricks, Dishwasher Pete, Wet Dreams, Uncommon Desires, & more!!! 148 pgs. P.S.All issues have glossy cover after #21.

#22 • MODERN TRANSMISSIONS & SENSORY OVERLOAD (7/93)
Interviews with Douglas Rushkoff, William Burroughs, Duran Duran, Ian Reed, Lisa Palac (*Future Sex*), R.U. Sirius (*Mondo 2000*), Mark Frauenfelder (*Boing Boing*), Skatenigs, Slug, Fastbacks, Kozik, Robbie Conal, Copyright Law in the Electronic Age, "The Sparkely Jewel" by Carla Bozulich, illustrated by Dame Darcy, MORE! 148 pgs.



#20/21 • SEX ISSUE (11/92)
Erotic Books (w/ Joe Zinnato), Carla B. talks w/ Ron Athey, Patty Powers, Debbie Tay; Darby visits Sexual Compulsives Annonymous, Dr. Susan Block, Cholita, Duchess De Sade, Sex & Drugs (a guide), Vibrator Reviews, Gay and Lesbian Zines, The Ultimate Sex Guide to LA, The Ben Is Dead Sex Board Game. 148 pgs. SOLD OUT!



#19 • RIOT ISSUE (6/92)
LA riots interrupt the Sex issue and this is what we get. It's still sexy tho. Included: the 1st "Dadspeak" (w/ Darby's dad), Kerin tells of her dangerous riot experiences in Covina, we rate the riot newscasters, FDA fuckers, UFOs w/ Rev. Al, Corey Dubin of KPFK, Cop Shoot Cop, Torture Chorus, & lots more. 80 packed pgs.

#18 • GLAMOUR ISSUE (3/92)
Beauty tips for junkies, Beauty in Death, Ben Make-Overs of Ian MacKaye, Jennifer Finch...; Connoisseur's Guide to The Perfect Car Crash by Rev. Al, Glamour Makes Dead Angel by Lisa Suckdog; Don Lewis talks w/ Glue, John Aes-Nihil talks w/ the Godess Bunny. Also Sound & It's Technologies (prt.2) by Mikki Halpin, music & zines. 64 pgs.

KIDDIE COMP CASSETTE/CD:

WITH RECORDINGS PEOPLE MADE WHEN THEY WERE 14 OR YOUNGER. STARING REGULAR JOES AND MEDIUM-TYPE SUPERSTARS. PRODUCTION ON THIS WAS DELAYED BUT SHOULD BE RELEASED FINALLY THIS SPRING. IF YOU GOT SOMETHING TO SUBMIT DO SO QUICK! LIMITED # TO BE PRODUCED. ORDER YOURS TODAY. IT'S TOTALLY GUARANTEED TO AMUSE. CD $10; CASS. $8.

ORDERING INFO

SAMPLE / BACK ISSUES ALL $5!
(include # or we'll send next issue)
SUBSCRIPTIONS: Bulk Mail Subscription (3 issues / 2-6 week delivery) $15.00; First Class Subscription (3 issues / immediate delivery) $20.00; "I'll be your best friend" Sub (priority mailing, free gifts, love, etc....) 40.00; Canadian Subscription $25.00; Europe & Elsewhere $35.00
BACK ISSUES $5: #28 / Bentime Stories, #27 / Retro Hell part 3, #26 / Retro Hell part 2, #25 / Retro Hell part 1, #24 / The Death Issue, #23 / The Sassy Issue, #22 / Modern Transmissions & Sensory Overload, #20/21 / The Sex Issue n/a, #19 / The Riot Issue, #18 / The Glamour Issue, #16/17 / The Gross Issue n/a, #15 / Revenge, #14 / Disinformation, #13 / The Broke Issue, #12 / Censorship Issue, #11 / Obsessions & Bad Habits
KIDIIE COMP CD $10 / CASSETTE $8
T-SHIRTS $15 (Must list size and color. Include 2nd choice in case 1st is unavailable)
BUMPER STICKERS $2 : Ben Dynamite, I ❤ BenIs Dead, I ❤ Geeks, I ❤ Mean People

SEND STAMP 4 FULL CATALOG!

$15

Black Issue T-shirt: Highly exploitive full color image on black shirts in youth L, adult S, M, L & XL.

The Dynamite T-shirt: Super fancy full color "Dynamite" rainbow type w/ glitter outline on: black, blue, or grey in youth L, adult M, L & XL. Also girly t's in white w/ red or black trim, black over-dyed with black trim, blue with lt. blue trim, in youth L. List 2nd or 3rd choices. NOW AVAILABLE: Lime green w/ blue, orange with white trim - youth L, men's L!

NEW!

$15

Retro Hell Shirt: Actually this includes the hulk image and the Ben Is Dead type only, on light blue w/ or without dark blue trim in adult L and XL, and youth L which also comes in white w/ pink ringer.

• please allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Call or fax if you are worried about your order – we may have not received it, or it may be out of stock. It is your responsibility to supply us with a change of address for both bulk & first class mail. Bulk mail is not forwarded, and due to the sporadic nature of publication, your mail forwarding order may be up by the time we are trying desperately to get you your magazine!

Send to: PO Box 3166, Hollywood, CA 90028 · 213/960-7674 fx936-dead
benisdead@earthlink.net · www.benisdead.com · www.killzine.com

the people

Nina Blake, Lorraine Mahru, Cliff Thurber, Patty Powers, Reverend Al, Carla Bozulich, Lisa Anne Auerbach, Ms. Vaginal Davis, Howard Hallis, Margaret Halpin, Jocko Weyland, Troy Bruno Balthazar, Brian Doherty, William Ham, Eric Warren, Bruce Elliott, Paul K, Darby, Rich Costigan, Joan Kelly, Kevin Chanel, Ryan Bigge, Jessica Hudley, Nicolas Freeman, Bruce Wagner, Ben Eshbach, Selena Romao, Stymie Baldwin, Jessica Jones, Aaron Cometbus

the artists

Sugar Levine, Maureen Shields, Gloria Alvear, Evan Mack, Justin Forbes, Paul Sharar, Fred Hoffheinz, Carlos Hunt, Crepe Suzette, Mike Okui, Jim Blanchard

the people behind the people

Evan Cohen; Sandy & Kurt Booker; Tom & Ellen (Big Top); Michael Rescignio; Dad; Peter, Johnny, Tony, & all @ China Times; Jen Garber; Geiger; Paul Simms; Dr. Katz; Foxy; Fontographics; Mom & Grandma; all Killzine Tour helpers – esp. Ms. Jennifer Lehrer-Brannon (see *Killzine Zine* 4 many more); Martin Sprouse; the knobble; North Face; my Raichle boots; Paul (the witness); Cafe Latte; Ron & Last Gasp!

editor, publisher, layout: darby

ad paste-up: mr. evan mack

cover design work: jon salenger
cover photo: lorraine mahru
cover concept: jon & darby

advertising: 213/960-7674 (24hrs) or benisdead@earthlink.net

web: www.benisdead.com

subscriptions: samples $5; $15 for three issue sub (bulk mail), $20 for first class. Canada $25. Europe $35. Beyond: $40. Make all checks or M.O.'s out to Ben Is Dead. Limited back issues available: send 32cent stamp for catalog. Subscribers MUST send us change of address! Bulk mail will not be forwarded. Check the box on your mailing label - if it contains a number, that is the number of the last issue you are scheduled to receive.

Newstand Circulation through BigTop Publisher Services. For more information call 415/974-1544 or fax 415/974-1328

Ben Is Dead reserves the right to edit everything. Letters and material sent become out property and will not be returned unless otherwise arranged. All correspondence should be addressed to: Ben Is Dead, PO Box 3166, Hollywood, CA 90028. email: benisdead@earthlink.net fax:213/936-3323 ph. 213/960-7674

©1997 BEN IS DEAD MAGAZINE

Table of Contents

My Mountee, by Bruce Elliot.....pg 9
Sex Club Story, by Patty Powers...pg 11
Pedro the Great, Troy Balthazar.....pg 15
Home, by Bruce Wagner.....pg 18
Strawberry Essence, by Jocko Weyland..pg 19
Ceiling Holes, by Nick Freeman.....pg 23
'Tis the Diver, Nevermore, by Darby...pg 32
The Chair, by Eric Warren.....pg 34
The Driven, Rich Costigan.....pg 37
Fuck You, by Carla Bozulich.....pg 41
Woods Near Raleigh, by Rev. Al.....pg 43
My First Memory, by Darby.....pg 47
Suicide Solution, by Lisa Auerbach..pg 50
Goodphoners, by William Ham.....pg 53
Diary of an A&R Man, Ryan Bigge.....pg 57
My Disease, by Brian Doherty.....pg 59
Frank's Passion, by Mikki Halpin.....pg 65
Shiny On Top, by Joan Kelly.....pg 70
Passing Time, by Selina Romao...pg 71
Boxers, by Cliff Thurber.....pg 72
The Laughing Man, by Ben Eschbach.....pg 75
W.T.M.H., by Jessica Hudley..pg 79
Carlos, Je T'aime, by Nina Dentata...pg 84
More Europe, by Aaron Cometbus....pg 87
Intimacy & Tomorrow: The Hamburg Diaries, by Ms. Vaginal Davis.....pg 89

+ more stories, music, reviews, nonsense throughout...

Quick Key to Subjects of Choice by Random Words:

Amazement . . . . . pgs 12, 85
Angel(s) . . . . . pg 23, 25, 51, 81, 108, 111
Blood . . . . . pgs 16, 25, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 51, 53, 60, 61, 75, 90, 95, 97, 98, 108, 113
Boredom . . . . . pgs 50, 60, 84, 85
Born Again Christians . . . . . pg 95
Cheese . . . . . pgs 44, 45, 51, 59, 62, 80, 97
Cleavage in danger . . . . . pg 51
Corpulence . . . . . pg 19
Crime . . . . . pgs 84, 113
Degradation . . . . . pg 85
Demon . . . . . pgs 15, 81, 95, 96
Depravity . . . . . pg 84
Disco . . . . . pgs 11, 12, 84, 90
Don Bolles . . . . . pg 96
Expectorating . . . . . pg 19
Explosives . . . . . pg 95
Fire and brimstone . . . . . pg 96
Gazooks . . . . . pg 96
Genius . . . . . pgs 30, 85, 110, 111, 112
Guilt . . . . . pg 47, 54, 72, 84, 85, 86, 96, 97, 112, 114
Hair club for men . . . . . pg 58
Hell . . . . . pg 6, 24, 25, 26, 30, 32, 38, 75, 95, 96, 110, 111, 113
Heterosexual . . . . . pg 12, 57, 95
Huge red cocks . . . . . pg 36
Jewish . . . . . pgs 48, 89, 112
Lipstick . . . . . pg 50, 66
Loathing . . . . . pg 84
Love . . . . . pgs 27, 35, 45, 48, 61, 67, 85, 91, 92, 93
Lucky Charms . . . . . pg 59
Masturbation . . . . . pgs 12, 44, 47, 48, 49, 61, 62, 84
Money . . . . . pgs 32, 53, 54, 55, 61, 62, 66, 67, 75, 82, 90, 93, 95, 97, 98, 108. 110, 113
Nihilism . . . . . pg 95
Pee . . . . . pg 12, 38, 49, 50, 71, 97, 98, 114
Pototo chips . . . . . pg 24, 50
Punk rock . . . . . pgs 57, 61, 94, 97, 102-113
Pussy . . . . . pgs 49, 86, 94
Salvation . . . . . pgs 34, 87, 96
Satan . . . . . pgs 95, 96, 111, 112
Scabs . . . . . pgs 25, 26
Sex . . . . pgs 3, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 25, 26, 28, 47,48, 57, 60, 62, 70, 82, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 98, 102, 104, 106, 108, 111, 112, 113
Sissies . . . . . pg 34
Sparkle . . . . . pgs 84, 98
Sugar . . . . . pgs 28, 30, 62, 76, 82, 98, 99, 113
Suicidal run-away slut . . . . . pg 25
Suicide . . . . . pgs 23, 25, 50, 51, 57, 58, 97
Tongue . . . . . pgs 24, 28, 45, 49, 55, 57, 58, 59, 86
Viscera . . . . . pg 50
Zoo arsonist . . . . . pg 18, 11, 112

Once upon a time

when I was a young girl, my father would read Poe to me for my bedtime story. There's nothing better than having a story read to you as you're drifting off – especially something that stirs you to dark expanses of dreaming space. Minus old-time radio stories on KNX or on tape, it is rare I get the pleasure today of being read to sleep. Instead I keep all my books around my bed, and take big hits off them as I arise and as I lie to slumber.

I'm a fan of short stories; the challenge to produce a concentrated work that embodies so much within so little. Though repeatedly short stories leave you hanging – a too abrupt ending after just getting involved with the characters. I find in the good ones an ability, in not so many words, to create a mood and abandon its reader, leaving them with a residue like a mildew, that regenerates its own life within them. Days later a haunting scene has finally been completely formulated with visuals and smells and subtleties before left unnoticed or never existing.

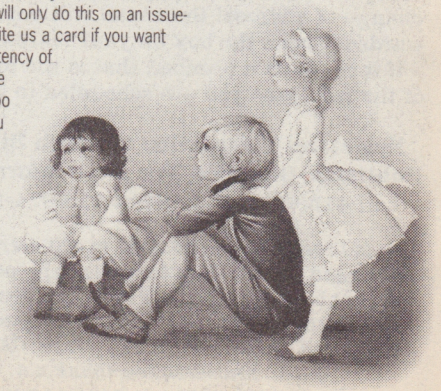
And after three issues of Retro Hell we need something like that. An unrestrained theme, something to give us all a fucking break already. So inside you shall find some fiction, some non-fiction, some just because; of all different brands and flavors. I made it a point to not over-edit, and so there is an uncorrupted raw copulation of singular voices. You'll also notice that, especially with zine writers, we have a knack for writing our lives – not necessarily transferring them into other characters and scenes. Many tend to dismiss this style of writing – perhaps because it seems to expose the writer's limits – while I find it an effective tool, and take equal pleasure in reading them if they are well-worked.

I know most don't read this section, which is why I usually put it in minuscule type without much worry – but for those devout fans I'm tipping you off now, that the countdown has started, and that after over eight years of being, BID's Judgment Day shall soon be upon us. Regardless, for fans and those who are maybe seeing us for the first time, by all means, do enjoy.

xo, darby

P.S. I'd like to take a moment to thank all the people who hit me with their cars in the last year, for without their mindless tendencies I would have been financially impotent. Thanks also to Carla B., Last Gasp, & China Times, for helping me during the rut. P.P.S. There are many more needing to be thanked who supported us during our U.S. zine tour. We're just finishing up with the Killzine Zine, which not only includes this endless list, but all the controversies, tour diaries, expenses, & how-to's. $2 (postage paid) to the *Ben Is Dead* address listed on the credits page – & well worth it obviously. P.P.P.S. Ben has always been free to the incarcerated. From now on though we will only do this on an issue-by-issue basis, meaning you need to write us a card if you want the next issue. Because of the inconsistency of the publication, & because prisoners are moved around so often, we've gotten too many bulk mail returns. After writing you will get the following issue that comes out, so be patient. And always send your new address when you move. P.P.P.P.S. If you want to contribute send us a card, or call or email with your stats. Sample work is a plus.

NOTE TO ZINE PEOPLE/STORES: We are now being distributed through Big Top (see credits page for contact info), and Fine Print will no longer be carrying us.

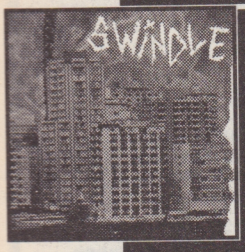


thank u Nina

CARGO RECORDS AMERICA

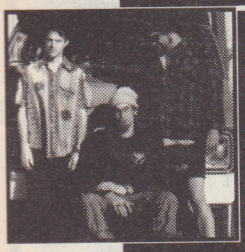
keep the beat
various artists

Down by Law, Lagwagon, Sicko, No Use for a Name, Blink-182, Big Drill Car, Guns n' Wankers, Swingin' Utters, Swindle, The Odd Numbers and More
Hairball 8 Cd



swindle
within these walls

"Balls-out, reckless abandon punk with just enough harmonies to make it awesome." *–MRR* "It's punk rock smoothed out on an R&B tip with a pop appeal." *–BBD*
Grilled Cheese/Cargo Cd/Lp

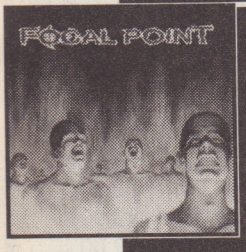


crutch
sold by weight

"Good, tough rock-n-punk stuff. Straight off the mean ole streets of San Francisco."
–Flipside
Bong Load Cd

mxpx
move to bremerton

Mxpx is back with five new songs of heart breaking pop punk. New full length album "Life in General" in stores November 5th!
Tooth & Nail Cd5



focal point
suffering of the masses

Debut album of brutal, new school, west coast hardcore. In stores October 15th!
Tooth & Nail Cd/Cs/Lp

Cargo Records America

1525 W. Homer 773.772.6005
Chicago, IL 60622 773.772.5344 *fax*

Sales dial **2**, Dance Dept. dial **3**, Buyers dial **4**

"WHOEVER IS WRITING THE SONGS FOR THIS BAND IS EVIL GENIUS...OUTSTANDING."
–SNIPEHUNT

CAKE

Fashion Nugget

PRODUCED BY **CAKE**

Capricorn

©1996 CAPRICORN RECORDS.

MANUFACTURED AND MARKETED BY MERCURY RECORDS HTTP://WWW.CAPRI.CORN.COM

SKELETON KEY

12" EP $8 • CD EP $9

Motel Records

210 E. 49th St.· NYC, NY 10017 · 212 755-4328
Postpaid in The U.S., Canada & Mexico: add $3 for Airmail.
Overseas: add $5 for Airmail. NY State: add 8.25% sales tax.

OUT OF ORDER

eye caramba CD $10. LP $8

"eye-poppin' ska core!"

DWARVES

are young and good looking

new CD and picture disc LP out in February!

GRIEF

miserably ever after

CD $10. Dbl. LP $10

"east coast doom-core"

98 MUTE

self-titled CD $10. LP. Cass. $8

"hardcore mayhem" -MRR

Send for a free catalogue and stickers.
Check us out at http://www.theologianrecords.com
All prices postpaid in U.S./ Mexico and Can. add $1 per item/World add $3 per item.
cash, checks, or m.o.s payable in u.s. funds to
Theologian Records pob 1070 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254

PESSIMISER · THEOLOGIAN
PESSIMISER · THEOLOGIAN

theologian RECORDS

PHOTO: GO-GO AND MUDHUD BY JEFF CRCA 1987

THE TEEN IDLES

Records & Stuff We Sell:

104. TRUSTY 'The Fourth Wise Man' * Ⓒ
103. FIRE PARTY complete discography Ⓓ
102. THE WARMERS self-titled * Ⓒ
101. BLUETIP 'Dischord No. 101' * Ⓒ
100. THE TEEN IDLES 6 unreleased tracks from 1980. †† Ⓐ
99. THE MAKE-UP 'Destination: Love, LIVE! at Cold Rice!' * Ⓒ
98. THE CROWNHATE RUIN 'Until the Eagle Grins' * Ⓒ
97. LUNGFISH 'Sound In Time' * Ⓒ
96. SMART WENT CRAZY 'Now We're Even' * Ⓒ
95. BRANCH MANAGER self-titled * Ⓒ
94. SLANT 6 'Inzombia' †* Ⓒ
90. FUGAZI 'Red Medicine' †* Ⓒ
71. NATION OF ULYSSES 'Plays Pretty for Baby' †* Ⓒ
40. MINOR THREAT CD has every song! Ⓔ
14. DISCHORD 1981 'The Year in Seven Inches' Ⓓ

* regular CD, price Ⓓ / † Cassette, price Ⓒ / †† CD single, price Ⓖ

NEW Price Guide, including postage, in U.S. $:

		U.S.A.	SURFACE & CANADA	Airmail
Ⓐ	7"	3.50	4.50	6.50
Ⓒ	LP	8.00	10.00	13.00
Ⓓ	CD	9.00	10.00	12.00
Ⓔ	MaxiCD	11.00	12.00	14.00
Ⓖ	CD single	4.00	5.00	7.00

http://www.southern.com/dischord/ dischord@dischord.com
Stores: We deal direct. Write us or fax us at (703) 351-7582

Illustrated **CATALOG!** please send one US $ or 4 US Stamps or 4 IRCs.

DISCHORD records

For a plain but complete LIST of records, send us a US stamp or an IRC.

3819 BEECHER ST. NW, WASH., D.C. 20007-1802

FOUND & LOST

by Bruce Elliott

YOU ARE INVITED TO HELP "MAINTAIN THE RIGHT"

Join the

RCMP

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

It was the summer of 1967, Canada's Centennial Summer. The True North never felt so strong and free. There was a sudden flowering of patriotic pride across the land. To celebrate, a world's fair was held in Montreal. It was called Expo '67, and it drew thousands of visitors, including my family and five-year-old self.

Actually, I was then five going on six, and anxious to see everything Expo held. However, my family's pace through it seemed far too slow for me, and in my haste I became separated from them. Oblivious to my plight, I wandered all about the fair, enjoying its futuristic sights and sounds. Eventually, I caught sight of Canada's own pavilion.

The building rose out of a vast open square, and took the form of an enormous triangle, ten stories high. The entire structure pointed downwards, like a great pyramid turned upside-down. It all seemed to magically balance on one tiny point. It captivated me, and drew me to it. I began to cross the square, and was soon overwhelmed by the triangle's shadow. That's when I noticed a pair of tall brown boots standing next to me. I looked up, and found that they contained a real live Canadian Mountie.

He looked even taller to me than most men, a scarlet statue crowned with a wide hat, like Smokey Bear. He bent down with one hand on his knee and the other at the brim of his hat. He looked at me and said, "Well hello there little boy." He was the first man I'd ever seen in real life with a moustache (this was still the '60s), and it parted into a big friendly smile. I should have been intimidated by him, but for some reason, I wasn't. I just smiled back, and waved a feeble "Hi." "Where's Mum & Dad?", he asked. I could only shrug my shoulders to confess the truth, I was lost.

He let out a laugh, and stood back up, towering out of my view. Ahead of me I now saw only those boots and his wide stripped breeches. His gloved hand came down, slapped against the breeches, and stretched out to me. "Let's go son," he said, and asked me to hold his hand. I was found.

His big hand held me in a firm and gentle grip. That big triangle, and all the other thrills Expo held could wait, this was much more fun. To this day I've no idea how long we strolled the grounds. Nor do I recall feeling lost, concerned, or even in trouble; I only remember feeling happy to be with him. I felt safe, secure, and special. At one point, several tourists with cameras pointed us out, and wanted our picture. We stopped and he spoke to them in French. They all looked at me sympathetically and said something I couldn't understand. He pointed to them, and asked me to smile for a picture, when I'd been smiling all along. The photos taken, we continued our adventure through the crowd.

Each stride of his boots equaled three of mine, and I became tired. I slumped the way a child does, pulling on his arm and resting my head against his leg. The soft woolen folds of his breeches felt like a comfortable old pillow. He let go of my hand briefly, and patted me on the head. With a chuckle, he told me to stay awake, and I obeyed.

Eventually, he lead me to a pavilion for lost children, where my Mom was waiting. My joy of reuniting with her mingled with the sight of other Mounties bringing home other lost boys. Mom thanked my Mountie, who bent down to me a final time and said, "Now you stay with Mum, OK?" Confused, I could only nod to him. The big boots turned, and walked away. I managed a not so feeble, "Goodbye." He turned, smiled again and waved. Then the constant crowd parted and engulfed him. He was gone.

Now I was in trouble, if Mom's look was anything to go by. My fear of consequence combined with a feeling of loss. For a moment, I was adrift in an emotional maelstrom that made me cry. Fortunately, this

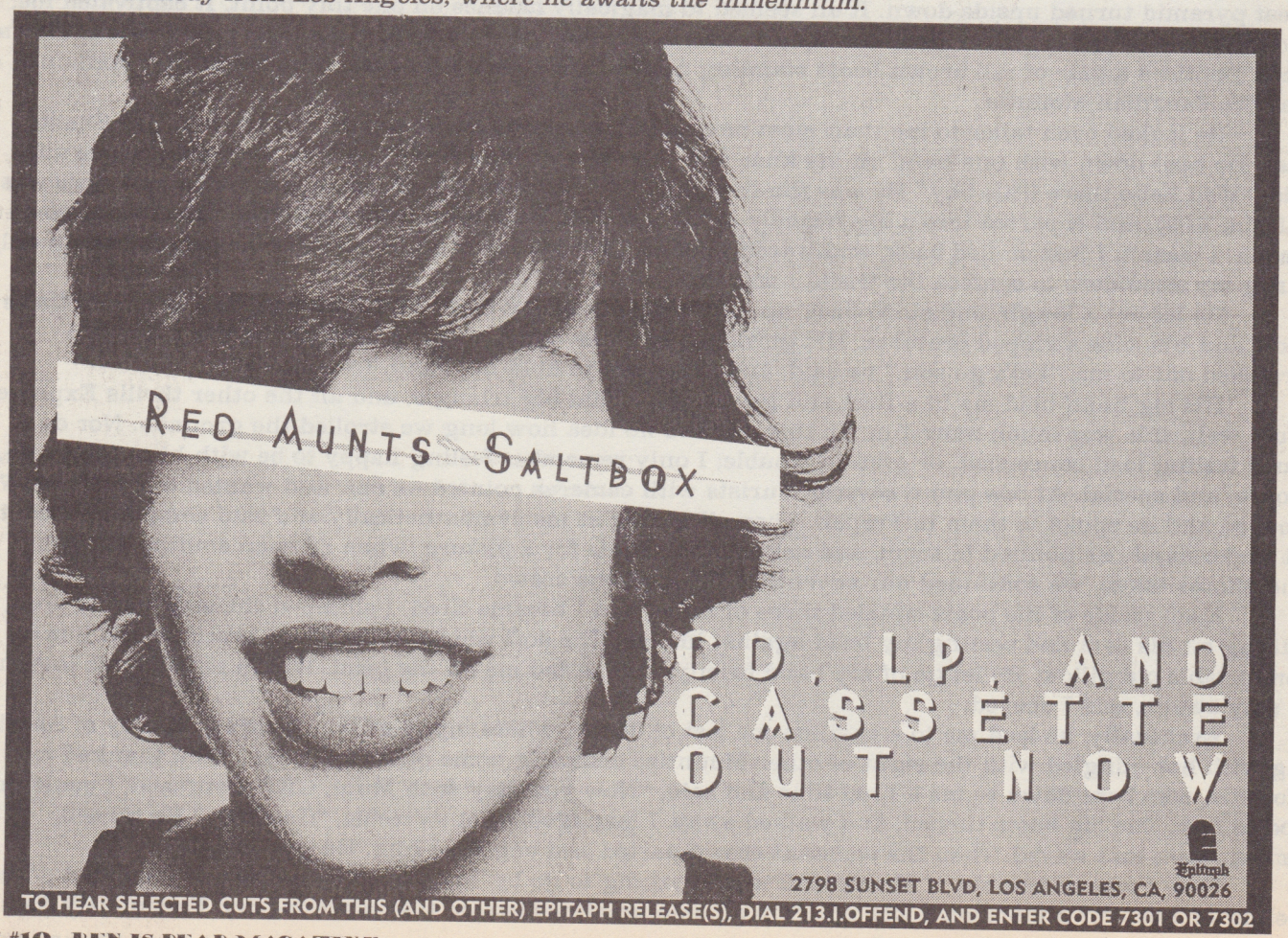
changed Mom's mood. She held me close, told me everything was all right, and I guess it was.

We made our way through an arcade filled with every device that would take a coin. One in particular caught my eye, and froze me in Mom's tracks. It was a low wide, space age looking thing, topped with a transparent plastic dome. Inside, you could watch as shinny metal parts came together to mold a figure out of colored wax. Such machines were a common sight in those days. But instead of the usual spaceships or dinosaurs, this one dispensed a small statue of a Mountie – I had to have one. I wanted it in the intense and irrational way that only a five year old can want. A sustained barrage of pointing and pleading netted me a shiny new quarter, featuring the Queen and a caribou.

I hurriedly pushed it through the waiting slot, and began to watch the magic. Like Dr. Frankenstein, I stared transfixed as a human form took shape beneath me. In moments it was ready, and I reached into the machine to withdraw my prize. My newest Mountie wasn't very tall, but he stood proudly at parade rest, atop a mound inscribed with the word, CANADA. He was made entirely of the brightest red I'd ever seen, redder than any crayola, redder even than a fire engine. It was now my favorite color. The wax that formed him was still soft to my touch, and warm. With an instinct that would take me decades to understand, I began to rub my thumb along the edge of his breeches, and felt them slowly harden.

My reunited family continued its tour, with Mom clutching me, and me clutching my little red Mountie. As we wandered, I looked for the big one who'd found and lost me, but I never saw him. That night, I held my little Mountie as we lay in bed, and dreamed of big men.

Mountie Maven Bruce Elliott *is a veteran of the National Association for The Advancement of Time & The Potrazibe Players. His work has appeared previously in* Ben Is Dead, *as well as* Cinelust. *He currently views the human comedy from Los Angeles, where he awaits the millennium.*



who suddenly becomes a cat owner. My friend Quasi O'Shea of Amoeba Records and Filmworks

STORY

BY PATTY POWERS

COLLAGES BY MAUREEN SHIELDS

I don't know why I fight myself all the time on writing yet another story about sex.

Sure, I can give you short stories of literary value – but hell, I write good stories about sex. I mean, my life is a simple one. I work, I write, I do all the art stuff (movies, plays, galleries, concerts, read books), and I spend the rest of my time thinking about, looking for, having or fantasizing about sex. So, when a friend of mine asked me if I wanted to go to a swingers' club with him, I went.

Actually, I stalled for a few weeks. The original plan I agreed to involved getting a small group of people together and going for a laugh. But, as expected, personal dramas surfaced. One girl wanted to know that the other guy would stay by her side for the entire night ("A musician in his twenties?" I laughed, "Fat chance!") Another girl declined when she discovered you had to check your clothes at the door. Several weeks passed and Paul called to ask if I'd go with him (he needed an escort since they only let in couples). Before I had time to give it any thought, I agreed. As soon as I hung up, anxiety ripped through me. Weird superstitious ideas went through my head. Stuff like – a fucking spree would block my creativity. (Others include things like only getting a publishing deal if I'm not smoking, or not having a decent relationship until I quit stripping. Where does this shit come from?) Actually, I was afraid I'd lose control of myself and spend the next few days in deep remorse, or even worse – that I wouldn't know how to say no even when I wanted to. Since sex addiction didn't seem to be an issue for Paul, I had to think of a gentle way of letting him know how freaked out I was. When I voiced my concerns he calmly reassured me, "Patty, you don't have to do anything with anyone if you don't want to. You can just stand around and watch. I'll be there with you. If someone's bugging you, just let me know and I'll take care of it. But if you see someone you want, let me know that too, so I know who's okay."

Once we decided on a plan and a secret signal that would let him know I needed help, we grabbed a taxi to *La Trapeze*. Once inside, we paid $75 to enter the club. Next to the cashier was a sign from the Board of Health "Fellatio and intercourse prohibited." An attendant pushed open the heavy wooden door.

Imagine a steak house – dark, heavy, wood-panelling, deep red carpet, and cheesy chandeliers. This was only the hallway. As we passed several wooden doors, Paul informed me that these were private rooms which lock if you want to be alone with someone. Midway down the hall on the left, was a luscious garden scene. In the center was a giant jacuzzi filled with naked people. I tried not to stare as we passed into the locker room. A gay Latin attendant handed us two towels while we undressed. He put our things into a locker and asked for our names. "What a surreal job *you* have!" I exclaimed, comparing it in my mind to my job as a stripper.

"Oh, it's surreal alright." he replied, "It's too bad I can't tell anyone about it. None of my friends know I work here. Honey, this would not go over."

is severely allergic to felines (like me), but call it the power of the city that "opens its golden gates

Our first towel-wrapped stop was the orgy room. A 200 sq. ft room covered in wall to wall mattresses with a mirrored ceiling. Six unattractive naked people were having some sort of scene that involved passive masturbation of one central figure. The image was hideous and boring. Paul and I snuck by unnoticed and sat in the far corner. "What do we do now?" I asked, feeling completely self-conscious and uncomfortable. I felt like I'd fallen back in time. The set-up struck me as very '70s and these ugly people looked like middle-aged swingers who'd been locked away in their suburban homes since *Plateau's Retreat* was closed by the Board of Health in the mid-'80s.

To my surprise, Paul pulled back my towel and began licking my breasts, while one hand moved down between my legs. I leaned back onto my elbows and watched him. I was completely detached, like watching a movie. My ability to slip out of my body when something is too much for me is something that comes from years of lap dancing. I hadn't imagined I'd be doing anything with Paul when I agreed to go out. I leaned back, closed my eyes and tried to forget where I was. It worked. Within a couple of minutes, I had his cock in my mouth. Then I felt hands – lots of hands – lightly touching my calves, and more hands brushing over my shoulders and arms. I guess the second my eyes closed, all those creepy people crawled over to us. I had to give Paul the help signal. When I opened my eyes, all I could see were three or four penis' looming a foot away from my face. It was like an x-rated *Night of the Living Dead*. I shifted my body to get Paul's attention. Just as our eyes connected, the sound system came on and Abba's "Dancing Queen" filled the room. Paul and I sat up, laughing hysterically. "I knew this place was a throwback to the '70s – this makes it absolutely perfect!" The hideous monsters surrounding us backed up a couple of inches, confused but desperate for us to continue. We looked at them, back at each other, jumped up from the mattress and headed out, leaving them behind.

Upstairs there were several small rooms, mirrored and painted red. Some had mattresses, some had a chair-like apparatus. I had once been tied to one of these chairs at a lesbian sex club years before. I wondered if things ever got wild in here. Judging by the couples downstairs I doubted it, but I didn't want to give up on the place this soon.

In one of the chair rooms, a small crowd had formed. We stood at the entrance to see what was going on. In the middle was a very tall man with a gigantic penis. Two overweight black women stood at either side of him, each with a hand on his cock. I knew I'd be horrified if I took in the whole picture, so I just concentrated my focus on breasts and cocks. I couldn't look at anyone from the neck up and I couldn't bear to take in the whole big belly, body hair, slovenly images. I stared at the giant penis. A hand (presumably his) gently placed my own hand on the cock. For a second, it had that magnetic pull – like I wanted to feel this massive thing inside of me. Luckily I looked up at his face. Up in the six foot something heavens, I saw a man with a large bald patch and short silver hair, piercing brown eyes and a thick dark mustache staring into my eyes. It was like an encounter with McCloud. I pulled back my hand – only to have him try it again. People pushed in behind me, forcing me deeper into the little chamber. Then the hundreds of pawing hands came at me from behind, touching my ass, my arms, moving in for my breasts. I looked down and saw three hands on the big dick. Two belonged to the black women, and the third belonged to a small rat-like hairball of a paunchy man hidden behind the giant. When the giant did a hand count and realized where the third hand came from, he brushed it away and lost his erection. The pawing behind me had gotten worse, so I pushed out of the room and went looking for Paul.

I found him in the next room, with his hand inside a woman lying face down on the mattress. I stepped into the corner beside him, and out of the reach of the pawers who had followed me. I didn't want to spoil Paul's fun, but figured I could hide and pretend to watch until he was ready to go. When he saw me, he reached for me with his other hand, and left the woman on the floor. It was so quiet that I was afraid to speak. I wanted to tell him to ignore me – leave me alone is more like it – but my body started responding to all the manual labor. Little moans and giggles came out of me involuntarily. I was trying not to come, but my body wasn't listening. The woman whispered something to Paul, who removed his hand from me right at my moment. I gave him one of those "What are you doing?" looks. He leaned over, "Do you have to pee?" he asked. "What are you talking about? Do *I* have to pee?" He stood up to block the pawers who were slipping into the room toward me. "That woman said you had to pee. I dunno." He grabbed my hand and took me out of the room, leaving one more time, our small familiar crowd behind. "Patty, I thought I grabbed you before when I went into the other room, but I must have grabbed the wrong person. This weird woman followed me. I'm glad to be outta there."

Paul and I wandered down the steakhouse hallway until we came to a dining room. About a dozen tables and chairs were set up around a salad bar and buffet table. Several sunken beige velveteen loveseats lined the walls, and formed a semi-circle around a small polished dance-floor. Above it, a colored disco ball spun. There was even a backgammon table for nude backgammon. This room was unbelievable. I wanted to stay there all night. I read the bulletin board. "Sensuous, sun-loving, orgasmic couple seeks white 25-35 COMPLETELY HETEROSEXUAL male for discreet encounter."

"Patty, we should have come on a Wednesday instead. It's supposed to be really packed on Wednesdays."

I was sorry for Paul that we came on a dead night, but relieved that I didn't have to witness overweight nude disco dancing or a line at the salad bar. On our way out, we passed the three stalker couples from upstairs. They tried to say something friendly as we passed, but I couldn't bear to make eye contact. We snuck into one of the bedrooms and waited. We kept our eye on the doorway, ready to turn away any, if not all, of the stalkers who'd try to come in. If there was anyone attractive, they would pass by sooner or later. I was tired of running.

Naturally, after a minute or two, Paul put the move on me again. Of course, I closed my eyes, tuned out and went with it. Before I knew it, a hundred passive paws were at me again. This time they got Paul. I pushed the hands off of me (same three couples, no doubt!) A fat lady rolled over onto Paul. Another mousier one, with glasses and poor posture stood meekly behind her husband, blocking the doorway. A crowd had formed. I tugged at my friend to leave but the fat woman grabbed his free hand and whoosh, sucked it inside of her. He gave me a pleading look, yanked his hand back and followed me out the door. I was hoping he'd had enough and we could leave.

Paul wanted to take one last look in the orgy room. He agreed to leave if nothing of interest was going on. To our

hear art no stranger waits..." he is now blessed with cat, popping pills every 30 minutes like protease

amazement, we saw a blonde Penthouse beauty in a black lace bra and panties lying next to a 38-ish banker-type. We slid onto the futon next to them. "Oh god Paul – now we've turned into a stalker couple!"

Just as she began to suck the banker's cock, he turned to face me. "It's her very first time here, so she's a little nervous and excited. She really loves sex," he mumbled under warm cognac breath. I spotted our three zombie couples at the entrance and I acted fast. "Do you want to go in one of the private rooms with us?" I asked.

As soon as we locked the door, Sharon introduced herself to us, saying something about being an actress. *Oh brother.* They said they were so happy to find us because they'd been stalked by everyone as well. Mr. Smooth-talking mumbler asked if we wanted to watch them fuck. I wanted to tell him that we'd be happier if he left us alone so we could fuck Sharon, but decided to keep my big mouth shut. Since this was the best it was going to get, I would have to put up with him – at least to distract him so that Paul could make a move. The guy started to french kiss me. I almost gagged. I seldom kiss most of the people I have sex with – is nothing sacred? But I figured since we wanted her, I'd have to be willing to put up with him. Of course, life's never that simple. Every time my hand went out to her, or she moved toward me, John *(John – ya right!)* would block us. In fact, the only way I got him to shut up about how excitable Sharon was so that Paul could fuck her, was to push his head between my legs – and even then he wouldn't stop mumbling. Of course, the minute Paul started to really go at Sharon (much to her squealing delight) John decided that it was time for us to watch him fuck her. Three thrusts and it was over.

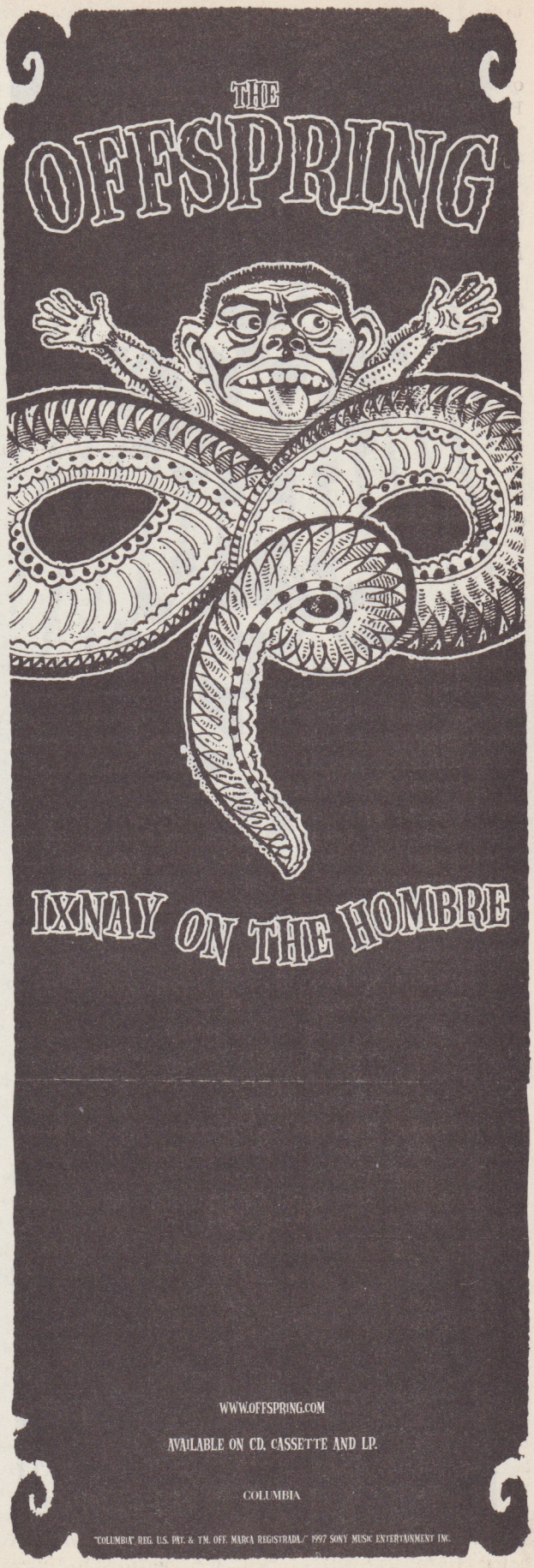
Sitting on a loveseat near the salad bar, Paul, Sharon, and I talked about whatever we had in common. (She really wanted to be friends it seemed.) John sat on a separate chair unable to communicate anything of interest. It was closing time and a line formed at the salad bar. Sharon smoked, we chatted and laughed while the others discussed what was available on the buffet.

Sharon gave me her phone number before we jumped into our cab. Paul and I figured out that John must have been her trick since he was from Chicago and all. At the corner Paul got a separate cab since he had to go uptown. When I got home I took a shower to get the smell of John off of my body. The cologne and cognac combination was revolting. I threw on some jeans and ran off to a local gay club to shake off the skanky vibe that had followed me home. I told Mistress Formika and some other queens about my misadventures in the straight sex club scene until the whole thing felt like a joke.

When I returned home an hour later I took another bath and washed my hair. Somehow the smell was still with me. I lied in bed for hours haunted by the memory of all the hideous nudity I'd witnessed. For days I was unable to look at anyone on the street without imagining their naked slovenly bodies. I knew then that this visual nightmare had been burned into my retina and would remain with me forever.

✦ ✦ ✦

Patty Powers is a writer living in NYC. Her work can be found in Paper, Ben is Dead, Slant *and* Verbal Abuse. *She recently completed her first novel* Roadstrip. *In addition to writing, Patty has performed with Ron Athey for the past seven years. Currently she is working on No Directions, a small press co-founded with Hank Dittmar which will go to print in 1997.*



inhibitors to ward off the effects of cat hair. Too bad, I was looking forward to staying at his

Mata Leão

88.04.3
BIOHAZARD

PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT LYRICS

BIOHAZARD

GIVE US YOUR HEARTS

LOVE IN EXILE
THE CHROME
CRANKS

PCP ENTERTAINMENT

*PCP - 026 CD $12, LP $9
POSTPAID USA ONLY
write for free catalogue
PCP ENTERTAINMENT
P. O. BOX 1689 NY, NY 10009 - 8908
*manufactured & distributed by matador records

HI-FI COMPATIBLE

WILD NEW FULL LENGTHS!

MONDO TOPLESS-LP/CD
Philladelphia's top combo busts out! 14 brilliant new songs led by the deadly roar of the vox organ on overdrive. Wilder than a Russ Meyer Flick. *36T-0001*

MARSHMALLOW OVERCOAT-LP/CD
The Overcoat returns from europe with their finest full length to date! From lilting pop to all out Fuzz Punk. This release is a masterpiece. 16 Tracks. *36T-0002*

BOSS 302-LP/CD
Top fuel shake and shimmy full length by the monsters of maraca rock. 16 tracks of full throttle fun. Seat belt not included. *36T-0003*

And Coming Soon...
Frigg A-Go-Go Lp/Cd, Hate Bombs Lp/Cd Hectics Lp/Cd, the element 79 10"/Cd, Fortune & Maltese 7", Loons 7" and more...Yeah!

Write today for a free illustrated catalog.
360 Twist! Records PO Box 9367 Denver Co 80209

The Life and Death of Me In the Silken Arms of Pedro the Great

BY TROY BRUNO BALTHAZAR

It all seems so strange to me now like some old fading dream, but dear reader I assure you that this was no dream. No the story you are about to read is real! I know…I lived through it. But wait! Let me start from the beginning when everything was still calm…when everything made sense….

I was doing what I loved best…sailing. I had been in the South Pacific for about a month and had grown quite fond of the warm calm weather. I remember I was just off Tahiti; it was a sunny day, the air was warm and pleasant, and the water was crystal clear. I remember doing some light repairs on a sail and just relaxing in the sunshine. "A little swim won't do me in" I thought as I threw on my thong bikini and lathered up my buttocks with suntan lotion.

I sashéd over to the edge of my boat and *gracefully slid* unto an upside-down swan dive that would have made Farrah Fawcett proud. I hit the water hard, exposing my genitalia to the cold choppy ocean, and grinned as I felt my tight little shorts being torn from me. I surfaced coughing and wheezing like a Guadalupian gimp. Managing to retain consciousness, I clawed aimlessly through the water in a spastic attempt to re-clothe myself proper. Just then the sea became rough and unfriendly, so I jumped back on my boat. The sky had become dark and grey and the wind started to howl and was whipping at my sails. I scurried to secure myself and my property…and that's when I saw it. It covered the whole skyline in blackness. It was huge…too huge! Like three buildings stacked on top of three buildings!…and it was screaming wildly.

What was this monster from the deep? This huge Demon that blocked out the earth's light? I grabbed for my spectacles and threw them on in an attempt to see clearly… and see clearly I did!

It was horrible! My brain raced wildly as I stumbled backwards. Could this be real? Was this really happening to me? Was I actually about to be swallowed whole by a *250 foot rubber chicken?*

I screeched like a tiny female weasel and grabbed for my pistol. I checked to see if there were any bullets…only one solitary bullet lay there in the case. It was my lucky silver bullet that my poor uncle Murray gave me (uncle Murray had killed a whole village of rubber chickens with this single bullet back in 31.) "No time to even think" I thought as I prepared myself to do

comfy centrally located flat while performing some SanFran club dates. Never mind, the promoters

[Artwork by Mark Okui: 310/433-0310]

battle with this rubber devil.

Next thing I knew I felt my left arm being torn from me. I lurched back and saw the monster was upon me, right there eating my flesh like a fried frog leg all moist and meaty. I began getting all misty and I could feel the corpuscles in my brain filling with gallons of ruby red blood. With one hand left I loaded up my gun in a sad attempt to stop this fricken floppy heathen.

I saw it bending down towards me, with its huge rubber arms bouncing and dangling in the heat of some twisted sexual fit. "The Bastard!" I thought, as it grabbed me in its beak and bit me in two large chunks of gurgling meat.

As my brain began shutting off I could hear his cute little sounds of sinful passion ringing sweetly in my ears. I watched in horror as my legs and torso fell into his hideous open gullet while my upper portion was left suspended there on the side of his face like a shivering human bread crumb.

I tell you folks, I lived like that for close to six long years. It was a sorry sight to see, a huge 250 foot rubber chicken attacking and pillaging ocean liners and steamships alike and all the time *me* just stuck there on the side of his chin. I watched in horror all the terrible things he did, the blood baths, the unthinkable death orgies.

I saw it all I tell you, but after a while I started to become used to it all, and sometimes even enjoyed it a bit. I starting rooting for him when we went a-pillaging. In time we became close friends and I named him "Pedro the Great": after my poor deceased grandmother (god rest her soul).

Well, needless to say, me and Pedro had some wild times together. We even made-out a few times when we were pretty sure no one was looking. I began to know him as Pedro the Frisky and I tell you there was something in the air.

But dear readers, please believe me when I say that the whole time I stayed with Pedro, through sickness and health, through good times and bad...I never let him get past second base! Even on our anniversary! (I'm no floozy don't you know!)

THE END

If that aint enough for your greedy little ass then buy a fuckin' skateboard for only 35 bucks if you live in the good ol' U.S. of A. or 60 dollars (the AMERICAN kind) if you live in some other place.

the green Skankin' Pickle album

Hey, ya wanna get a fat -ass chubby catalog of rare punk rock type music from those lil' darlins at Doctor Strange? Well then send three stamps to p.o. box 7000-117 Alta Loma, CA. 91701

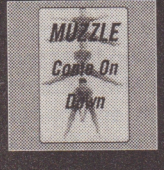
lp/cass $7 ppd in the u.s $10 elsewhere
cd $10 in the u.s.a $12 elsewhere

Further more you should really find out if a Doctor Strange band is comin' to your lame town-http://www.cyberg8t.com/drstrange

DR. STRANGE RECORDS

have juggled a gigantic loft for me to stay in off of Fulsom that used to be a notorious bathhouse

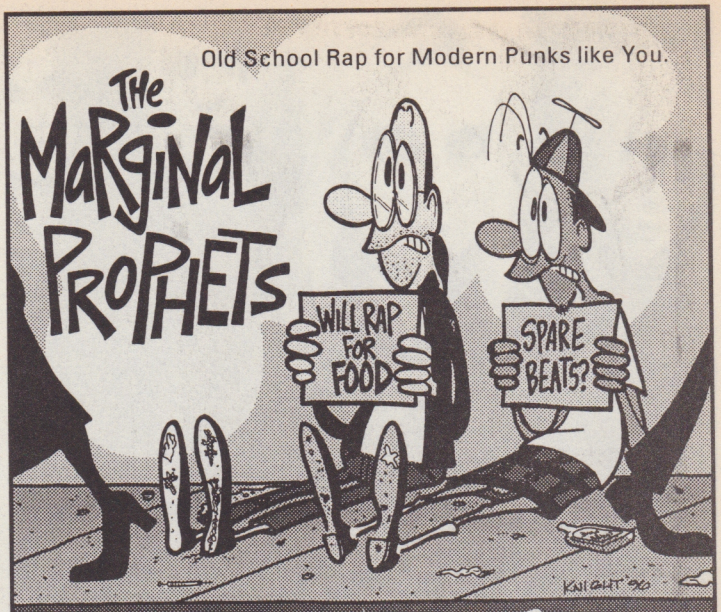
Pick it up
on CD, cassette and vinyl. CHEAP!



KINETIC

http://www.RepriseRec.com/ © 1996 Reprise Records

Old School Rap for Modern Punks like You.



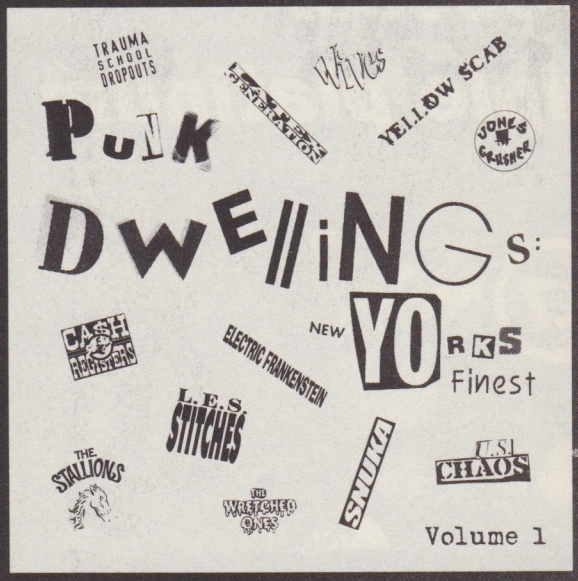
"Twist the Nob"

Debut CD On Sale at: Aron's - LA, Poo-Bah - Pasadena, and throughout the SF Bay Area. Distributed by VALLEY & NAIL.
Mail order via K Records, P.O. Box 7154, Olympia, WA 98507
www.iuma.com/IUMA/Bands/Marginal_Prophets
Phone: 415.431.7552 **email**: gammaray@slip.net

GAMMA RAY RECORDS
P.O. BOX 41-0582
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94141

For FREE mini-comic and sticker, send SASE to Gamma Ray Records

PUNK DWELLINGS:
NY'S FINEST, VOLUME 1

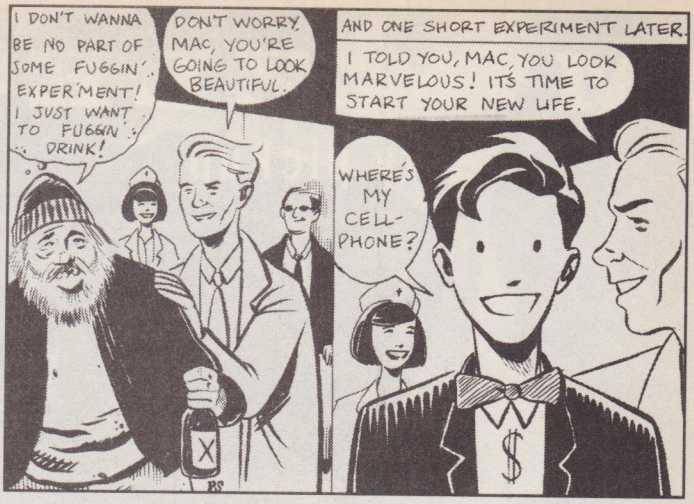


12 OF NY'S FINEST PUNK BANDS
PERFORM 12 ORIGINAL AND 12 COVERS
24 BEER DRIVEN TRACKS IN ALL.

AVAILABLE AT RETAIL STORES EVERYWHERE

To order Punk Dwellings: NY's Finest (Dwell-1008) CD, send check/money order totaling $16.00 (postage paid in U.S.A.). Foreign orders add $2.00 for shipping. For information and catalog send $1 (U.S. Currency) to: Dwell Records, P.O. Box 39439 Los Angeles, CA 90039-0439.

©℗ 1996 Dwell Records.



HOME

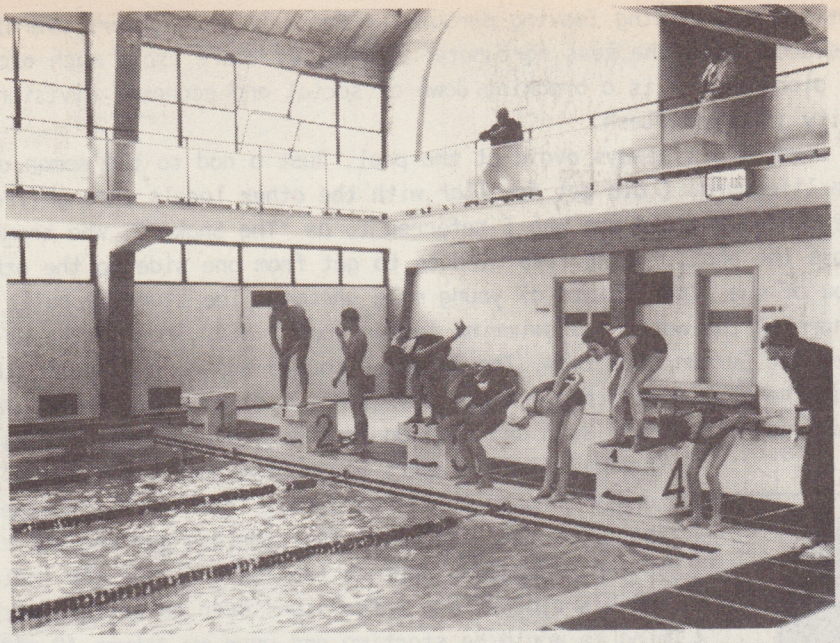
by Bruce Wagner

Once upon a time, 25 homeless persons were randomly taken from the streets of downtown Los Angeles and driven to a private clinic in the Bel Air hills. There, they were scrubbed with antiseptics and medically evaluated; those disabled by AIDS, unmanageable alcoholism or drug dependency were sent to hospices, as were two unsuitably volatile schizophrenics - each one $500 richer. Only eight of the homeless candidates remained. They were sent in two customized mobile homes to the Givenchy Spa, in Palm Desert. A private staff of nurses, nutritionists and New Age therapists initiated a closely-watched regimen of cardio-vascular toning, customized caloric intake and energetic purification. At the end of three weeks, the only recognizable feature separating the homeless persons from the other well-heeled guests was the formers' poor dentition; upon "graduation" from the spa, temporary bridges and caps made that division negligible. Some of the homeless persons were fitted with contact lensesbut they found them difficult to wear and exchanged them for prescription Italian eyeglasses. After their stay at the oasis, the entire group was flown to Paris on a G-III jet and put up at the Plaza Athenee. Mercedes limousines were at their 24-hour beck and call; each "homeless" person traveled with translator, advisor and guard. They were taken to the finest restaurants and introduced to internationally known writers, artists and painters - some of whom were aware of their origins. In fact, the whole endeavor was the latest "performance piece" of a Belgian "living sculptor" whose sponsor was the Laguna widow of an Oregonian prodigy of computer games. (She and the Belgian were occasional lovers.) Paris society feted the "homeless" contingent, who were dutifully outfitted in Prada, Gucci and select haute couture. Sharon Stone was initially confused over the nature of the Belgian's piece - when she realized the "homeless" persons were "real," her reaction (and that of her entourage), was outrage and disgust. She couldn't believe so many others had been decadently enraptured. At the end of around ten days, the "homeless" were flown back to the States and installed in a gallery. Over what the Belgian called a "detox/retox period," deprived of their new clothes, their groomers, handlers and newfound companions, they were allowed to slowly regress to their original state before being released downtown - some, clearly in a disoriented state.

Bruce Wagner is the author of "I'm Losing You" (Villard).

Art by Paul Sharar, who writes and draws comics for the Zoo Arsonist Press (write for catalog: POB 6322 San Pedro, CA 90734).

back in the '70s. When I arrive, I find that it still looks (and smells) like a sex sauna. It seems



STRAWBERRY ESSENCE

by Jocko Weyland

Before I started going to the pool three years ago, I had heard that there were city gyms that were passable and very cheap. It seemed a little farfetched in New York, where gratuitous expenses are normal. I inquired and found out that there were six gyms in Manhattan run by the Recreation department. The yearly membership is $25. That's such a small amount that it begs disbelief.

It turned out to be a great find. The fee really was only $25, and there was one conveniently located that had a gym, a basketball court with a track around it, and most importantly, a pool. I hadn't been able to swim in years and this was the answer to the lack of physical exertion that New York can engender, especially in the winter. I started going two or three times a week after work, it was even open late. I began telling people about this amazing discovery, but then became wary of promoting it too heavily and stopped giving out the secret.

The building itself has a major facade with four monumental classic columns. Inside there are high ceilings and vaulted archways. The locker room is huge and old-fashioned, with decrepit lockers and worn wooden benches. The pool has green tiles that reflect a slightly gloomy, dark light. The water is strongly chlorinated, not enough to sting your eyes, but enough to give off a substantial Clorox odor.

I found myself thinking of it as my pool. The best thing was how uncrowded it was. At the most there would he five or six other swimmers and getting your own lane was no problem. Sometimes near closing it would empty out and I would have the entire 25 meter pool to myself. The water would get completely smooth, the only sound the echoing of my arms hitting the surface. Like being alone in a mountain meadow a block away from Times Square, an escape from the bedlam and intensity of the city.

Absolute sterility would be too much to expect for $25 a year. It is actually pretty clean, just not spic-and-span. When it rains, the floor in the locker room gets soppy and uninviting. The stairs down to the pool are narrow, dark and unpleasantly watery. A sign on the wall declares "No spitting, no urinating, no expectorating allowed in the pool". The part about expectorating always struck me as a bit excessive - wasn't "No spitting" enough to get the point across? The most unsavory experience I had on the puddled steps was having to edge around some bright yellow vomit splashed over them one night. The swimming session that followed was hard to enjoy to its fullest.

The gym attracts a varied clientele. Well-to-do and poor. Children and geriatrics. People who look like fitness is a big part of their life, others whose corpulence suggests otherwise. People who can obviously afford a more expensive health club go there. Maybe it's the location or the unpretentious atmosphere. On the other side of the spectrum are the patrons who are more interested in the facilities as a place to rest and bathe. The homeless, and the nearly so, come to use the bathroom and the showers.

the current owners were fixated by its past life and decided to keep it somewhat intact as a tribute

There are a couple of signs prohibiting leaving personal effects in the lockers overnight, but they are only gestures towards discouraging the less fortunate. In reality there isn't much exclusion, it's fairly lax and everybody gets along. There is a breaking down of social and economic divisions in the nudity of the locker room. Equality in naked flesh.

Conversation is something I always avoid at the pool. Just a nod to the woman at the front desk, an occasional hello to the lifeguard. I did get familiar with the other locals through frequency of contact and observation. They included the old man who I referred to as "The Shaker", who trembled abundantly and paddled tortuously across the pool, taking five minutes to get from one side to the other. His gaze revealed an appreciation of the finer points of young male anatomy. The sturdily built woman in her 60's who swam powerfully, churning the water and swimming faster than I did. She had the no-nonsense manner of a retired member of the East German swim team. The Japanese couple who hung in each other's arms and giggled in the shallow end. The physiqued lifeguard who always had a coterie of female admirers. The middle-aged man who sat on the bench and didn't swim and then would make inane attempts at talk in the shower. The basketball players whose post-game boasting and repartee echoed loudly through the locker room. There were also the men who weren't there for exercise, like the homeless guy who was constantly falling asleep propped up against the lockers, and the indigent dandy who laid out his clothes and possessions over an entire bench. When I went swimming he would be starting and upon my return 40 minutes later he would still be meticulously dressing, finishing with a black t-shirt tied around his head, topped off with a swanky cowboy hat. They were silent acquaintances I expected and got used to. Their presence was reassuring.

There was a swinging door pattern with the locals. Some would disappear for months then suddenly reappear. Others would climb out of the pool and go up the stairs to oblivion, never to be seen again. They were replaced by new participants dropping into the eclectic mix of habitués.

The closed off area that contains the showers has walls on three sides that go half way to the ceiling. There are 4 wall mounted showers that mostly provide hot water. Two metal folding chairs are the only objects in the room.

My typical shower is just a rinsing off. For various reasons expediency, not wanting to carry toiletries, and my clean shaven head - I forgo lathering. I do that at home. The rinse is adequate for a decent wash, but not enough to exclude the possibility of licking my wrist hours later to release a strong emanation of chlorine aroma.

One night after a satisfying three-quarter mile swim, I came around the corner into the shower area to find a young Hispanic man with his hands on his penis. He was picking at it like he was searching for tics. I thought I heard him say, "Oh boy". I had been going there for a year or so by this time and although this activity was out of the ordinary, it didn't surprise me too much. I proceeded like nothing unusual was happening and went to the shower farthest away from him, faced the wall, and showered, lingering less than I normally would. While I toweled off he was still investigating and plucking at his genitals. He didn't look up.

A few minutes later I was drowsily getting dressed in the far corner of the locker room. I saw the man from the showers, with a towel wrapped around his waist and holding something, talking to the only other person in the room. I couldn't hear the exchange. Intuition told me I was next in line for an interview. The next time I looked up he had almost made it to my position. He held up the cylindrical article and stated solicitously "This is for you". Regarding what he was offering, I made out that it was a large bottle of Strawberry Essence shampoo. Jolly Rancher red. I looked back to his face - he was waiting for my acceptance. I pointed at my head and shrugged a "thanks but no thanks" message. Ignoring this pantomime he reiterated, "I want to give this to you - take it". He was completely serious. In an almost apologetic tone I replied, "I really wouldn't use it . . . I don't have any hair . . but thanks anyway," beaming like I really would have liked to take it. He then repeated himself, a little more urgently. I contemplated the container of plasma pink hair care product again and then . . "Thanks a lot". I smiled appreciatively as if

to the glory days of inverted hedonism. Doesn't matter to me in the least, I have the whole place

I'd never entertained the thought of refusing such a generous gift. Satiated, he walked away happy. I put my new shampoo in the locker and finished dressing. I wanted to leave as soon as possible, determined to not take the bottle with me. I waited until he was out of sight in the bathroom, shut the door on the locker with the shampoo in it, and briskly headed for the door. I looked over my shoulder – he hadn't appeared. I made it without him detecting my ingratitude.

For a while after that I nervously checked for him when I went to the pool. What if he'd examined the locker after I'd left? Would he confront me about rejecting his present? After a few visits my anxiety faded, I didn't see him around and relegated the incident to my memory, another anecdote from the pool.

About a year later, after a long break in my routine, I returned to my familiar haunt and had a good long swim. Felt great to be back in the water. Afterwards, the locker room was crowded and I walked on the balls of my feet into the showers. I found a young man, not unhandsome, standing on one of the metal chairs which he'd moved over under the shower. Barely paying attention I put my towel on the remaining chair and got under a shower two spouts down from the bather using the furniture. A minute or two went by, the rising steam and the muffled chatter from the other room contributing to a hazy and dreamy state.

The spell was broken when I distinctly heard the words "Here, have some soap". I turned to see the man on the chair proffering a bar of soap. Convinced that he had said what I thought he said, I made modest declining gestures and mumbled, "No thanks . . . that's OK". This denial wasn't accepted and the soap was tossed to me. I caught it with a mild "thanks" and began to daub my shoulders lightly under his watchful gaze. While I was trying my best to act like I was using the soap with some eagerness, my benefactor enthusiastically expounded on the virtues of soap. How it was good, it kept you clean, you should use it every day. It was evident he thought that soap wasn't getting the respect it deserved. I nodded in agreement and added some pro-soap comments of my own. I also explained that for several reasons I didn't use the magnificent substance in that particular shower. He didn't seem to really listen. After some more up-with-soap talk, he told me he was standing on the chair because he got an infection on his feet from the floor in the locker room. This unsolicited disclosure met with some sympathetic "hmmms" and "oh yeahs?" from me. After a little more hygiene discussion, I handed back his bar and said, "Thanks for the soap," cheerily and got out of there.

As I was putting my clothes on I heard one of the gym's custodians who had come into the locker room telling my shower partner to get off the chair. This directive was met with vehement protestations. The argument got louder and then shifted into Spanish, in which the pace and volume of the yelling increased substantially. I left to the sounds of their pitched verbal battle.

Out in the cool night air, warm and sedated, I realized that the man I had just showered with wasn't a stranger. It dawned on me that the soap advocate and the shampoo pusher were one and the same. The same touched soul. Hygiene-obsessed, preoccupied with sanitation and sterility. Compulsively seeking to create cleanliness. A latter-day Howard Hughes at the city gym. He just wants to be disinfected, pure. He's up against a lot of impurity.

It's been almost a year since then. The pool is opening up after its summer cleaning and perennial repairs. Winter is coming and I'll be going back to the old place. Maybe I'll run into the troubled saint of purgation again. As a tube of toothpaste or a can of shaving cream is insistently presented to me, I'll be gracious and say thank you. I'll make an effort. I'll try harder to be clean.

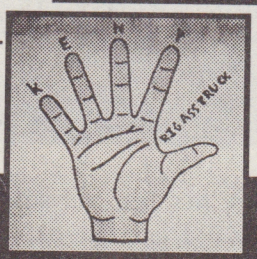
to myself. It's enormous...no *cavernous* and dank plus a bit erie like something foreboding is about

Three Fun Things You Can Do

UPSTART

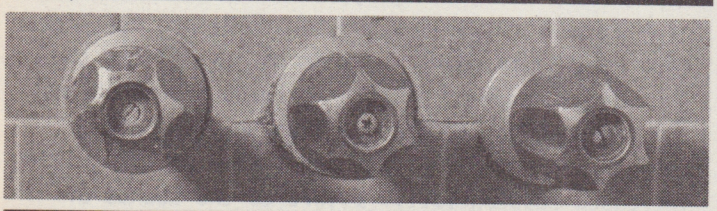
hang ten with the masked wrestlers of surf-rock
—Los Straitjackets

burn rubber with nyc's daddy of punk
—Simon Chardiet

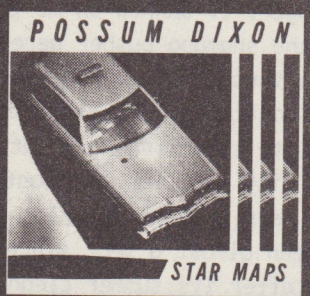


shake yo' ass with memphis funksters
—Big Ass Truck

Upstart Records email: upstart@rounder.com
Mail Order: 617.661.6308
Also available at Hepcat 714.532.2095
Good As Any Better Than Some 814.437.5154
Get Hip 412.231.4766



POSSUM DIXON
STAR MAPS



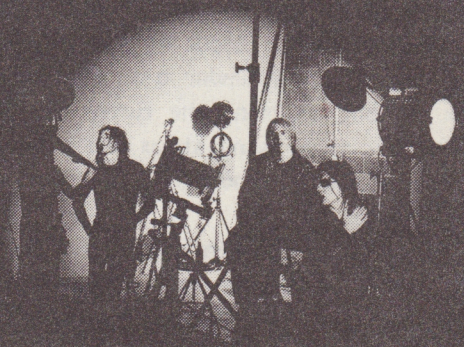
new album
OUT NOW!
Available at Aron's, Let It Be, Restless, Soundwaves and Electric Fetus

ps... and the car stops... and the car stops... and t

SURF

©1996 INTERSCOPE RECORDS. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. INTO © 92625

plexi
cheer up



SP 370 SUB POP LP/CD

Sub Pop Records: PO Box 20645, Seattle, WA 98101
http://www.subpop.com loser@subpop.com
1-800-SUBPOP1

Photo by Robert Sebree

"CEILING HOLES"

art and text by Nicholas Allen Freeman

I died at 12.
Passed out behind a dumpster, my last breath took in urine, spit and stale beer, as wrists went red, fingers red, eyes red....

This is the part where you retrace your steps, looking for comfort just now lost. Fuck that. When I was 12, alone and cold on the streets, I wanted to die and all the fast food bathrooms were locked. So I cried around a corner, found rusty nail in board, and tore and tore until the chill was universal.

Never attempt suicide within 100 feet of a phone booth. Passing bums like to call 911, feel that it's their duty to save poor, innocent girls that know the fuck what they're doing, that don't want Clear! and you a toaster thrown in the shower, dancing in and out of the white.

I remember the white. I belonged there. Not in the hospital with endless history tests and psychologists that vacuum up your secret shit. "We're here to help you, Jennifer. You can trust us."

They burned my clothes - too dirty to save. Gave my junk back in a ziploc, minus the $17.23 and my last will and testament. "To the world and everyone in it: Fuck You!" Now known as exhibit one in the neverending files of Thomason.

Thomason Memorial Hospital is a quaint little cottage near the coast, with triple barbed-wired fences and janitors that grab your ass while you sleep. It probably looks like a cement pretzel from the air, scattered salt representing the patients combing the halls for consistent realities. The color scheme was stolen from an ice-cream place, but instead of 54 flavors there were bottomless bulk-bins of anti-depressants and activity-supressors, in designer colors. They even give you those cute joke cups with your medication - "What's black and white and red all over?"

Me, the very first night there, in restraints after trying to bite my doctor's ear off. He looked like a Circle X grunt in drag, all nametags and "How can I help you?". Fingered his head to my lips and whispered-licked a Fuck You before bearing teeth. I laughed myself silly as the cameras behind mirrors recorded his screams - I guess you had to be there.

But you weren't. You didn't die at 12, weren't a ward of the state that needed to be under 24 hour supervision, and as sure as fuck don't know what it's like to be crazy.

I know. There's this man I met on Day 3 over orange juice and graham crackers; he had a dark gray beard and knew the first 6 pages of the phone book by heart. Not the numbers and names - the instructions. As a treat for not yelling all morning, they let me go down the ramp into the day room, and I bummed a cigarette off of him as we watched TV. "Did you know," Eric dragged, crumbing his pajama top brown, "that in 1996 the world will cease to be?" No shit, and he was "there'll be fire and angry angels and dead folk come alive, and I'll be in here watching it on TV." I smiled through the stimulants and adjusted my 32 cent blue booties.

Crazy fuck, the world's ending in the year 2000. Here's how I know:

Day 27, according to the marking pen on my bedside table, I was fucking around with Quarter, showing him this cool pool shot I'd learned (you play a lot of pool when you're insane) and this girl walked right up to me. In my face, smiling.

"Come with me." Grabbed my hand, I dropped the cue (the green ball went in).

So we walked into the hallway - past the patients with cups asking passers-by for spare pills - and she's wearing hospital junk, white with light blue polka-flowers, that's about to fall to the floor. Hair is balloon blue, half-on, half-off, and her bare feet covered with multi-colored marking pen stripes and circles. The ancient lady who spat in my breakfast on Day 4 laughed as we passed (sitting in her chair, tearing the ads out of old National Geographics).

"Where are we going?" Approaching the emergency exits, always a good question to ask.

"Fine." Stopped by the vending machines. The MouthSavors were gone, the cola button blinking red. "Hey. I'm Laura. We're leaving now." Rushed for the door, they whooshed open with a department store alarm - when you just couldn't rip the plastic tags off - and I just stood there staring at her, at the candy choices. What the fuck just happened?

And she hovered there, silhouetted in the sun passing through the iron gates beyond, and held out her hand to me. I

to or has occurred. I can't quite shake the vibe this place puts out – something sexy yet sinister.

wanted to hug her, to laugh at her feet, to give her some pants and forget about my pain, my hospital bracelet. She was like a neon cow-girl doing a rope trick, and if she was a soda she would have extra caffeine and twice the calories of the leading brand. My legs started to move me towards, but my left hand was latched to a pull knob for salted peanuts. Smiled as wide as a stop sign, stuck out her tongue, and held her hands high in the air as the nurses came, both middle fingers raised to attention. They knocked me down to the ground face first, and dragged Laura off kicking and screaming to the quiet room, her waving blue smearing sleeves.

I thought I was good. It took 7 hours for her to shut up, which I knew for certain because I was in the room next door, on "escape watch". The first hour was the easiest to handle, with the occasional groan between the slaps and constant crying, and the nurses the only ones yelling, trying to "talk some sense into her." Soon someone said, "fuck that" and they opened the drug drawers. Hour two had her literally all over the walls, body-slamming the padding while not saying a word. I hid in the far corner, shaking under the rolled-up floor mat - the only shadow available. It was pointless to cry so I gnawed at my wrists until they reddened. Hour three, after I pissed in the corner since they wouldn't let me out to toilet, she started to talk, and I couldn't help but listen. First, she got inventive and started to yell out a blow by blow description of her stripping off pajamas. "I'm such a hot teenage girl, don't you want to peek in the window at me?" Doctors do that, peek in with their clipboards, and I can only guess what they saw that day. "I'm naked here! Come on in and get some!" It was quite embarrassing and also rather exciting, because she's cute to the point of exasperation. Finally, she gave a humongous "fuck this shit" and started at the walls again.

Hour four was when I started to pound back, and she noticed. "Hey, is that you?" and I yelled my loudest yes, all the while bracing for the inevitable doctor rush, needles dripping. "Cool." She lowered her voice some. "Can you still hear me?" "Yeah." "Still" "Yeah" "Still" and she was only yelling half as loud, but it almost seemed intimate - communicating by brute force through cement and rubber. I told her my name, and she said she already knew, that and a whole lot of other things. Hour five was when she told me about her life and her dreams, and hour six was when I told her mine. Sure, the doctors were recording every last word, but to them it was one big delusion, more stuff to jerk off with onto their PDRs. So when hour 7 came along, and Laura told me about the end of the world, they had proof that she was crazy but I knew better.

She was the one. My way out.

I was born at 12.

Laura was my mother, my savior, my secret lover that cradled me back to life. She had no idea, of course. Just her own problems to deal with.

On Day 4 I met Douglas - Quarter, I called him, because he always asked me for one - and the first time we spoke he just had to call his girlfriend on the outs. "She's gotta be worried sick, and they won't let her visit." For some reason I laughed hysterically when he said this, and turned back to the industrial strength ashtray - it had a metal mouth that ate the butts, scratching wrists if you reached in too far. I traded bearded Eric my crackers for cigarettes - little did he know that I swiped a box off of the serving cart.

No, it wasn't that funny. But when every window has bars, and there's twitching people behind the couches, entertainment comes from the oddest places. I guess Quarter understood, because he eventually forgave me. We became TV room buddies, and soon enough he forgot about his girl and made his move. Yeah, it was still Day 4 when during the 6 O'Clock news I found his hand on my thigh. Now the rules were strictly NO CONTACT around those parts, but the last touch that I had that was anywhere close to loving was when I held my knees under overpasses, trying not to crack. So I let him touch, I let him want me, and even shielded him from the lazy guard sleeping on the bad side of the triple-tagged plexiglass, so he could have his way in peace. He didn't do much, actually, just held there and whispered about the tracks on his arms, and the 3AM bathroom mirror shadow-self he couldn't stand. I understood, and as soon as I held his hand back someone noticed, and kept us the hell away from one another.

Separation breeds desire, and on Day 5 I found myself kissing him behind the snack machine, where the cameras couldn't reach. He wasn't particularly kind, or clear about the mess he was in, but he held me and gave me his warmth. I was the one who grabbed him this time, I was the dead girl that needed someone to love. Beside the electric potato chip cabinet, he did just fine.

Day 6 over lunch he whispered in my ear that he wanted to fuck me, but all I heard was that he adored me and so I smiled over the mini milk cartons - 3 for me, 2 for him. The plan was simple - strike when the night shift started to yawn, and the juice needed refilling. So I straightened up my thrift store summer dress - the one Illyana herself picked out for me, the bitch - and waited in the TV room for him to come. The late night movie was about a war, and lots of men were dying horrible deaths - badly scripted, that is, with atrocious film editing. Even then I was the consummate artiste, always looking for the aesthetic in the miasmic. So when the wrong side won and the flags were hoisted, Quarter snuck on in and sat on the couch beside me. He had brought a blanket - it was cold, so it didn't look that suspicious. Stared into my eyes as he reached up my legs, and as he drew close all I felt was hate. I hated my body, wanted him to take it away from me and rip it to shreds, and he did the best he could under the circumstances. Under the pink wooly blankets he licked my face and reached inside of me, and all I thought about was the war, about what side I was on. For a split second I was on his side, and grabbed for him despite myself, only to

At least there are no cats on the premises. I dismiss my uneasy thoughts as being strain from too

have florescents shine in my face and Bob, the guard with the yo yo, threw Quarter to the floor.

They called it attempted rape cause I wouldn't stop crying and yelling. I was pissed off because he didn't get to finish the job, because I wanted so desperately to have more excuses to hate myself. A suicidal run-away slut seemed a lot better then just a suicidal run-away. Of course, Illyana did her best to try to convince me otherwise.

Day 7 had her fawning all over me, promising to "make things right." She saw to it that Quarter was put under lock and key, until I confided in her about what really happened. Then she went big sister and told me all about her first time (it wasn't my first) and how horrible it was (mine was wonderful) and that after she had talked it out it all became better, somehow or another - she wasn't too specific. I nodded as we couched in her office, and as we chatted I swiped a stray letter opener and stuck it down my sock. Parting on a high note, she gave me a warm hug and told me that my doctor said it would be O.K. for me to go to group tomorrow. Reminded me of a window-display dummy girl, stiff and happy with nothing to say except buy the crap that covers me, that hides my plastic soul. Gave her an elation-face that reflected back from her glasses, went straight to the bathroom, and cut my throat over the sink. The blood didn't come at first because the blade was dull, but once it did I gasped and wallowed in the pain. Reflected back was a paper doll with her head half-snipped off, everything colored all out of the lines. I started to snicker-cough, but my legs gave out and I slumped down next to the hamper, still warm and damp from the last shower. My eyes were filled with the white, as I balled myself up on the dirty red cement, and everything would have been perfect if Clara didn't walk in just then. Clara the towel freak, Clara the screamer.

Code Red. Stretcher. Ambulance. Those machines that beep while they breathe for you. I was all set up on Day 8, and "fortunately" for me the wound was fairly superficial. Illyana came all the way to visit, with flowers even, and we cried together in intensive care. On Day 9 she snuck in some chocolate and cigarettes, along with the news that she had finally found my mother, and that she was coming right this instant to see me. When she left for her shift at Thomason, I tried to strangle myself with the IV tube, but ended up knocking the stand and everything over. There was a lone dust bunny under the bed.

Day 10 brought dear old Mom from dear old home to sit over in the corner, by the window, crying as the cars left the parking lot. "Why are you doing this to yourself?" All I could do was picture her on the floor, broken bottle in hand, throwing up onto the phone. I was 5, and terrified. I was 8, and confused. I was 12, and the bags were packed, and her wallet empty. "Please, come back with me."

Day 11 I told Illyana about my mother. I begged her to send me back to Thomason, to keep her the fuck away from me. She kissed my cheeks and made the arrangements - I got the ball and chain, and there were no visitation rights. My mother was too crushed to fight for me, and she went back to her liquid hell forever broken. She died 11 days later - car crash, only she was the drunk driver.

Day 12 and the scab was beautiful. I was allowed one supervised trip to the vending machine, and I got some well-needed Grape Flavumm. Illyana brought supermarket tabloids and I wrote the first page of antizine. "Hate everything, to make room for love." Life was a third-floor, bubble-gummed hell.

Good girls get what they want. I, being black to the core, was given a break on Day 13 and got to go back to the quiet room anyway. "We just need to watch you," Illyana said, "You'll be out soon enough." So I sat.

You cannot understand. Locked door, locked mind, locked heart.

Hiccupping for air through tears and the crack between me and my mailbox-blue floor mat fort, I finally had proof that I was worthless. Broken. Crazy.

No amount of sticky red was going to stop the pain, and the only certainty was the way my face lay against the cool, hard, cement floor. I wanted to become that floor, to stretch long and wide and thin across the earth and be spat and walked and shit upon. I wanted to hug the world, to forever look up at the sky with misplaced wonder. Under the flickering lights, I finally understood why they called it the quiet room, when no one who went there ever shut up. They wanted you to yell at yourself, scream silent hatred until it hurts. So I did, and by the time Illyana came for me I had gotten pretty good at it.

Laura was way better, mind you. She made the quiet room speak.

Day 17 and I was allowed to be in the same room as Quarter again. It was my 3rd group, and all the crazy kids were in full force. You would think that drugs and shit wouldn't do that much to you in the end, but there in front of me were a dozen stories to the contrary. Yeah, I was the only pure death-junkie, but everyone shared the same basic illness. Life.

"My name's Douglas. I don't know why I'm here." He was over by the kitchen door, slowly ripping up his yellow card. Definite no no, it was our passport to success, signed 20 times daily and more on weekends. Good for pizza and a handshake - I burned mine the day before.

"Yes you do. Be honest with yourself, with us." No, not Illyana. Big Bill the magnificent, at your service.

"I said I don't know. I should be in juvie, not some nut house." He'd cut half his hair off yesterday with safety scissors, and now he looked as fuck as punk.

"Call it what it is. A psychiatric hospital..." Bill reminded me of an old sofa. Big and smelly, and way too soft where it counted.

"And we're the patients. We're sick." That was me, glaring at Illyana. She was wearing a fuzzy sweater that matched the carpet perfectly - lint prone, scratchy and ugly. I've never known another woman as beautifully scary.

"Jennifer, you don't have to be so negative." Ah, the wisdom of Bill.

"I'm sick. I'm always sick." Towel - Clara, that is, obsessing as usual. She constantly brushed her back-length, jet-black hair. I would die for her hair, so supple-shiny. In the very first group I was in, when Bill made her put away her comb, she convinced us all that dirt was a communicable disease. She could feel the filth dripping down the back of her head, and the itching wouldn't stop unless she combed it. Eventually he gave in.

"None of you are sick. You just need help." Finally my guardian angel. She smiled at me but I just looked out the window, counting the fence holes. Way too many.

"How can you help me?" Doug was this close to running; his forehead screamed it. I wanted to fly across the room, take his hand, and meet the stairs with him. But I just sat and thought about the carpet, until Arnold spoke up.

"They can't. We can." Obviously this wasn't hospital propaganda, so I listened.

"You're right. That's what group is for."

"I would tell you what group is for, but I don't want to get

off of checks. Sufficed to say that I sure as hell don't deserve to be here. None of us do." He was burning a hole in the wall with his eyes, his voice. "You can't possibly understand what it's like to be in our shoes, so you have no way of helping us." His forehead was lickable, like a chocolate ice cream cone. "The only help Doug or anyone else is going to get will either come from me, or the crazy ass people on the unit. Better me than them."

Everyone stared. Illyana started to say something stupid yet supportive, but then Big Bill gathered himself and quickly changed the tone.

So we talked about our feelings. About what "color" we were (I was gray, always gray...), and about all the ways we fucked up things. I just wanted to get out of there and smoke, and as soon as the meeting ended Arnold ended up joining me by the benches.

"Hey. Jenny, right?"

"Yeah." I smiled. "I liked what you said up there."

"Fuck it. We all say the same thing to ourselves before going to sleep." He looked up at the clouds overhead, and the sea gulls far below, but still beyond our reach.

"How'd you get here, anyway?"

"Checked myself in. I'll tell you about it, sometime." Threw and shoed the fire out, and started to walk away. "But right now I've got an appointment. See ya around."

He walked over the grass, past the door, and picked up the basketball lying by the fence. Disappeared around the records building, and as Illyana and Bill huddled us baby chicks back in line, his bounce, bounce, bounce, gave me a peculiar sense of hope.

Hope that Laura made shine brighter than the sun.

Day 28 I fell in love.

It was breakfast, and things were basically back to normal (except for double meds due to the day before). I had my rubbery oatmeal with extra salt, my 3 milks and 2 bananas, and Laura was led in by Illyana and pushed through the food line, obviously out of it. She had the overly medicated look well beyond any street-junkie, with lock step lock jaw nothingness, and I just wanted to cry. Pajamas were soiled and sagging, her hair leaking blue all over her cheeks, and I knew that as soon as she filled her red tray, she would be back to the quiet room. So would I, if I tried to talk to her.

As she approached the end, I took one of my half-empty milks and elbow-knocked it onto the floor. "Shit! Hey Steve, I need another milk. O.K.?" He nodded over his morning newspaper, and so I walked over to Laura, who conveniently was by the drinks suspended in ice. Said hi to Illyana, took my 2% and a napkin, and wiped off Laura's face. She smiled slightly, and secretly placed something in my hand as I went back to my table. Satisfied that she did her daily duty, Illyana promptly ushered her charge back to lock up, and I bused my stuff as quickly as I could. Meeting was in a half an hour, so that gave me time to contemplate my gift in peace. It was a crayoned note, green upon a brown paper towel. In the bathroom, as the other girls took a shower or misapplied makeup, I read through my tears:

Did you hear me last night? I was screaming for you during the shadow watch but all that came was 3 men and something too sleepy to fight. But I kept a crayon from the day before, won't mention where I hid it, and I'm writing this to you (over) cause we're getting out of here girl, in exactly 40 days we'll walk right out the front door and be together forever. We'll talk on Sunday.

Love, Frisbee.

This was all wrong, all right, all mixed up with no where to go. I didn't want to start swimming in her fantasy, in her reality, but in the steamy hiss I contemplated flushing the evidence, and ended up treasuring it always. She was right, you see, always was and always will be, and every time I walked passed the quiet room window, trying to sneak a peak at her, she would be staring right back at me, smiling.

Day 29 was activity time, with modeling clay and shrinky dinks (I made the first antizine logo, and gave it to Quarter). I got to vacuum the psycho kids club house, and Arnold got a whole extra hour of free throws because he knew how to kiss up. After dinner there was a PG-13 movie, and Doug tried to snuggle up to me during the over-sexualized chase scene, but Clara snitched and stray hands were lead back downstairs to the unit. I went to sleep feeling at home for once, and if I had a gun I would have shot myself right then and there. All that was available was my locker key, so I used that to fuck up my ankles (the cleaning crew had to give me new linens daily).

Sunday was Day 30, and I woke up with the unnatural urge to peek in Towel's room, which was across the hallway. Everyone avoided that place and for good reason, because the floors were always strewn with wet wash cloths and extra hospital linen, which she used to buttress her bed from the evil, unclean spirits. She was afraid of something far more serious than filth, but that's the way it manifested itself.

Anyway, as I looked in that morning, holding back my expected wince, there Laura was, poking around her night stand in an ideal Illyana dress. I couldn't help but jump over the towels and bear hug her from behind.

"See, I told you." She threw herself down on the bed, and I followed. Jumped up again to close the curtains, and then gave me this look that made me tingle all over.

"How the fuck did you get out?" I was tense, and I wanted desperately for her to lay down beside me and rub it all away. These feelings confused me, yet seemed so natural.

"Simple." She joined me on the bed, the headboard thapping the wall. "I didn't move for a day, didn't open my mouth except to empty my 3 trays." Brushed the blue out of her face, and smiled. "So in their eyes I was back to high society, and they had special doctor orgies which resulted in my freedom. Neat, huh?"

I stared at her, and at her tightly made bed. I felt so shy, so weird.

"What happened to your ankles?" She quickly Twistered herself around, flopping her feet onto the pillow while she cautiously caressed the new scabs.

"Sometimes I don't want to walk any more." Her feet were freshly marked, still smelling of pen vapor. "Or to live any more." I cautiously touched a red circle, and it was warm.

"Listen here." Started to tickle my feet, but it felt more like a kiss. "You are mine now, and that means I get to die first." Clara walked in for a second, made a loud I'm listening noise, and then left in a huff.

"You are so weird....Laura? Frisbee?"

"Given name, earned name....it's all the same in the end." Turned back around and crawled up to face me. The bed creaked slightly, and in the distance I heard a laundry cart.

"Did you mean what you said the other day?" I was breathing heavily, wiped my right palm behind my back.

"You mean is the world going to end?" Her eyes, I wanted to lick them, to taste their vision. "Yes, but only for me."

"No, I believe that." She had a faint scar on her upper forehead, and I instinctively reached out to touch it. "I mean the note."

"The note?" Took my hand and placed it to her cheek. How

don't start till tomorrow so I settle in and decide to get a good night's sleep. I pick the deluxe room

could I not want her?

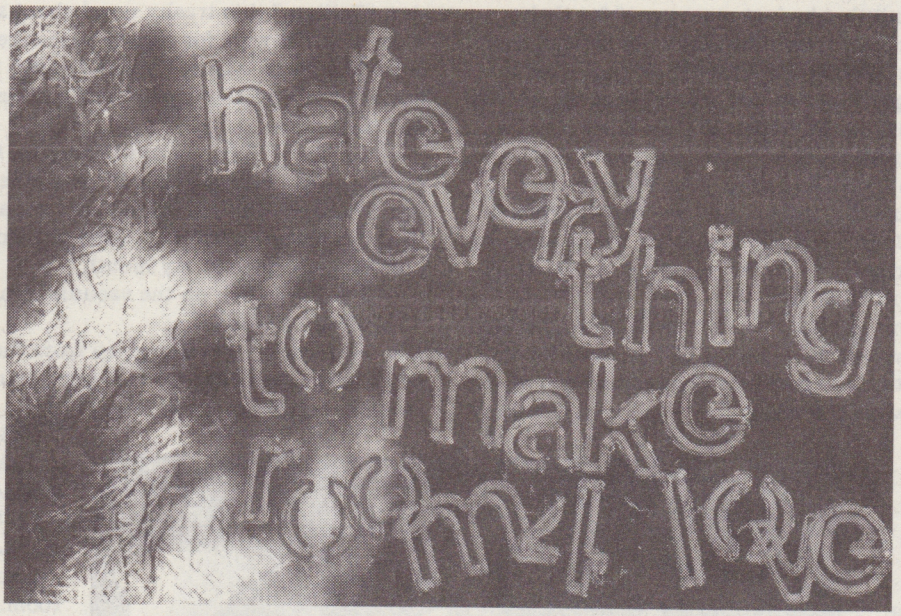
"That we're going to leave." I drew my feet towards her, and when they touched I promised myself never to cut them again. "That we'll be together."

"Silly Jenny, we are together." Brought my hand to her lips, and sucked on the fingers, like straws full of lemonade.

"I can't stop thinking about you..." I was shaking, and she drew me next to her. She smelled like freshly cut grass.

"Don't."

Brought her hand to my mouth, and poked inwards. "Please."



Was it I that kissed her first, or her me? I want to remember the taste of her nose, of her lower left breast, but I can't, not in the way I should be able to. Everything was too fast, too perfect, to reliant on some master stroke of fate that gave me life and started the countdown to irrevocable separation and sadness. All I know is that on Sunday morning I didn't want to die anymore. I wanted to live, with Laura, and nothing would ever change that.

Clara came back again, and "accidentally" fell through the white plastic curtains, effectively putting an end to my bliss. I'm not sure what she thought she found, but I wanted it to be blatant, to flaunt my first and only love in her face. The half-nakedness was enough for her, and before I could regroup the room was full of nurses, and it took me on the floor begging to Illyana to not being put into the quiet room again. Laura skipped in with a smile on her face, and her silence filled the unit. Her heart sang of me, and of something else.

The white. Always the white.

My bliss lasted until Day 32, when Laura was allowed to go to her first meeting. She sat across from me, but kept staring at Arnold. I hated her for that.

He tried to bum a cigarette off of her, but she didn't smoke. She played one-on-one with him, while I cried behind my sunglasses, wanting the lounge chairs to become electrified. I really didn't understand, she was supposed to be mine, but there she was obviously taken by Arnold, and his tall, smooth brownness that even I could appreciate.

Quarter tried to make me feel better by letting me win at pool, but I just went off and sulked by the vending machines until bearded Eric came over and told me his only story, this time with a twist.

"You know the new blue-haired girl? In 1996 she's going to eat the sun and all the lightbulbs will break. Do you understand me?"

I didn't. I did. I asked him how he knew so much and he coughed-smiled.

"Come on! She's broadcasting, like channel 6, 11 and 34 all wrapped into one, and everyone knows it." Scratched at his bushy neck. "You think the doctors aren't afraid? The blue hair...."

He was crazy. I was crazy because I understood him. He gave me some stray cigarettes and a pat on the shoulder, and babbled on to himself back to the TV room. That night they found him dead - heart attack - smiling underneath the static.

I didn't do anything on Day 33. Didn't eat, didn't even get out of bed. Laura came by once, snuck in and kissed my cheek, but I didn't even react. No purpose, no moment, no life. If she really didn't know what was going to happen, then she would have stayed and caressed me back into the world. But I had a ways to go yet, and in the end she was just passing through. She would be back for me, when the time was right.

I had my first visitor on Day 35. My father.

"Jen, you look so much better." 6 foot, clean shaven, flannel and jeans, and the most annoyingly lovable voice in the world. I missed him.

"I don't feel any better." He pressed his hand against my forehead, and smiled.

"But you are. You will be." His new wife was going to have a son in a few days. Gregory - not as cute as Ai but then who possibly could be?

"Dad, get me out of here. I don't belong here." He sat down in the wooden chair by the table, and frowned, like when I was 10 and my mother was nowhere to be found.

"I've authorized your doctors to keep you here indefinitely, until everyone is sure that you're better."

What. What?

"Then you can come live with me and Rachel, if you like."

This was wrong. Why couldn't I just die and be done with it?

"Yeah." Problem is that I would never be better. Still am not. I couldn't wait for the doctors to realize this

"You mean it? I would love to have you back..." He stood up triumphantly and kissed me on the cheek. I smiled away the pain.

"I'll come back next week, O.K.?" Rachel needed him. His family needed him.

"O.K."

"I love you."

Silence, as he consulted with Illyana and I stared up at the ceiling. The tiny holes that regularly pricked the tiling were suddenly comforting, each one a potential route to take, a quicker way to the end. Why did I want finality so strongly? What did life have to offer me in the first place? I lived despite my mother, despite the terror and the pain, and no matter how much I tried to help, or to keep Dad and her together, she always ended up drooling on the floor - killing me slowly. The fuck with it, if that's the plan then why not go all the way, and

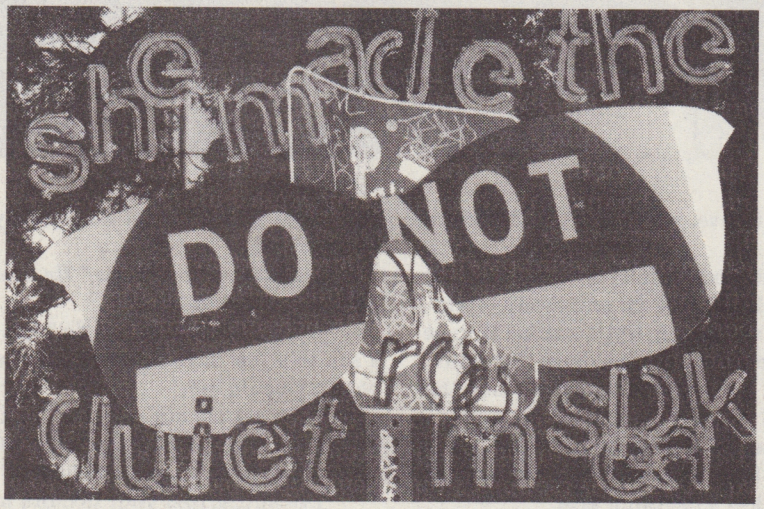
which must have went to the queens who decided to use the baths as a cheap hotel substitute.

so when I left her I resolved to run and run until I couldn't go on any more, dig my own grave, and be done with it. Then I could be free of my mother, of the scars that no one can see, of everything. Of course it didn't work, and she got to die while I was poked and prodded and analyzed and medicated and told how broken I was, a gingerbread girl that needed reconstructive baking.

If I "improve," do I win, or do they? And if I died then, in the halls of stately Thomason, or 2 years later in a dirty bathtub somewhere, wouldn't that be just more proof for their hypothesis? The only choice was to live solely to spite my captors, and so I prayed to the dark behind the ceiling holes to give me enough strength to get out of bed, forsake the knives, and shame them all with my brilliance despite it all.

And I did. I put on my clothes, went to the next meeting, sat right down next to Laura and openly held her hand. I talked about my life, and my mother, and the nights when I would stare at the walls in the dark, breathing in the stillness, wanting to make it permanent. No more yelling, no more broken telephones, no more mistakes.

When it was all over, even Towel gave me a hug, and I didn't push her away. It turned out that her father was like my mother, only he took it out on her sexually, and instead of screams through the walls there was the warm white stickiness between her legs that would never, ever wash away. Thus her obsession with being clean, with protecting herself from the invisible unknown, and after we had a talk we came to an understanding. She even shared a secret with me, one that turned everything around for the better.



It seemed that right after she found Laura and I together that Sunday, she had a massive flashback back to what had happened with her father, as anything even the most remotely sexual usually produced. So she was in a serious state, and when Laura finally was allowed back into her room Clara had stripped all of the sheets off of the bed we had glowed upon, and covered the mattress with towels. Laura got to the bottom of it all soon enough, and then started talking about me. About what had happened, and about how she felt. It turned out that she wasn't ignoring me at all, but was just giving me space to get stronger. She needed me whole, so when we did leave nothing would trip us up. You would think that escape would be the last thing you'd want to tell Towel, but she never said a word, not even on Day 68 when everything was Code Blue and she sat crying on her bed.

"I'm not clean," she yelled. "I'm not clean."

On Day 40 I was up to a pack and 6 pool games a day. Bliss.

"I used to sell my brother's Star Wars figures so I could have another hit." Arnold only did half a pack, but his new record was 346 consecutive free throws - he didn't remember the number of misses.

"Yeah, well I used to suck on 10 cent super balls, like jawbreakers. Between bounces." Frisbee hated smoke, green felt tables and always tongued her meds. She had an empty shampoo bottle full of lithium on her windowsill.

"I used to make my Stacy dolls sell their bodies on the strip, and then strangle themselves with waxed dental floss." I was hoping for lung cancer. To be eaten inside-out by car exhaust, melting pieces of death that look cool when you stand around holding them at your hip.

"Fuck, you've got me. I fold." Went back to his book of the day. "Falling," this trashy novel about an airplane steward wanted world-wide for raping passengers when they went to the scary plane toilets. I recommended it; at the end he's blinded by salad tongs and dies in an institution. Best laugh I had all month.

"Chicken." Laura was working on the connect-the-dots for antizine. One way, it was a TV, the other, a kids burger-meal box. Our pile of spare change and sugar packet loot was huge; the boys always overbid. "I used to turn on the vacuum cleaner and stick the tube in my mouth."

"I used to open up the vacuum cleaner bag and lick the dust off my fingers."

"Sick fuck!" She leaped up from the table in a mock fury as I swiped my winnings into my Illyana dress, which I had recently converted into a backpack.

"Sick but oh so sweet!" Arnold gave a Hah! from behind the paperback.

"I'll be the judge of that," and Laura dragged me out of my chair to the center of the room. All of the chairs were still pushed back from group; we were using the cafeteria for important Big Bill visualization exercises, and opted out of the popcorn filled after-party. Bribed Steve with future compliance, and so he gave us 15 minutes of run-wild time while he flirted with the cute nurses - especially the blond one that took everyone's temperature.

"Not in front of the kids!" Too late. She was break dancing on the carpet, and forced me to join her in a wrestling match. I let her win, and she gave my mouth a victory lick. It was our second day of open affection, and Melissa from the night shift left me a Hallmark earlier that morning: "No tongues now!" I adored her, she let me smoke in bed.

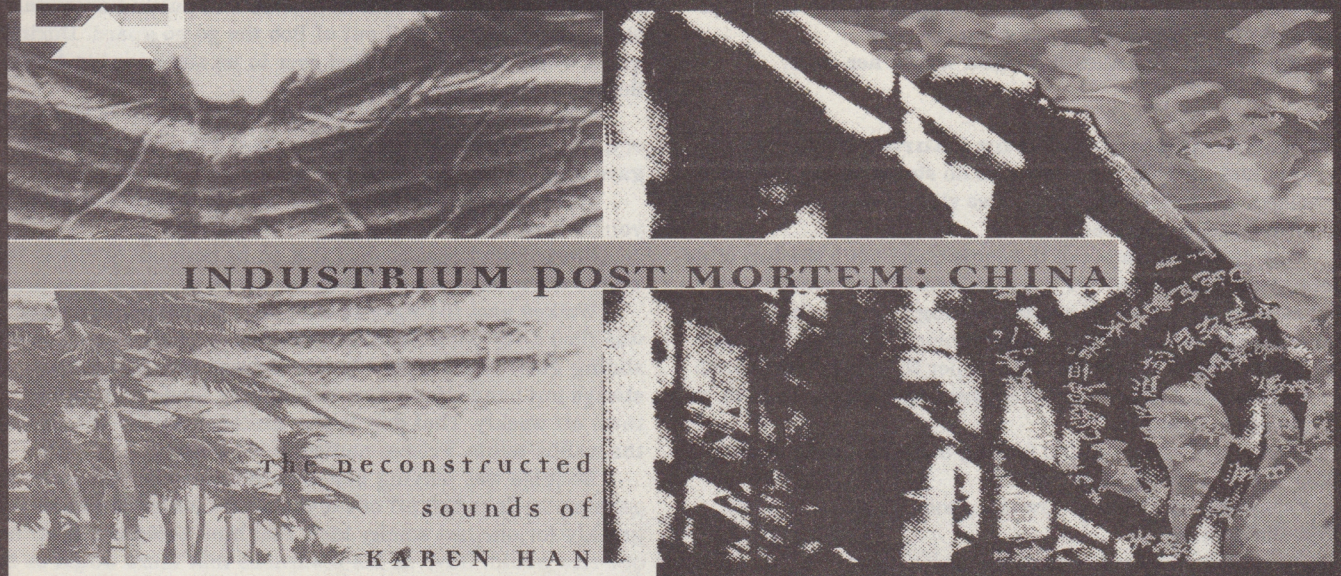
Actually, I was starting to feel comfortable with the whole system - it was like junior high school only with a lot more detention, sex and drugs. In fact, if you were addicted to anything, the last place that you should be was in a hospital because everything was way too available. Arnold had to push away bags despite himself, and I had all day and night to plan my demise, with assistance from the staff. They loved to talk about that stuff, took notes even. Clara was gone that night, on a two-day stay with her parents, and Melissa looked the other way when I took her place in the shadows, Laura at my side. We whispered about our free future while she marked up my belly, the ink filling the air with intimacy.

"In 10 years I'll do this again, and then you'll understand what bearded Eric was talking about." I moaned yes as I sucked on her earlobes, the water fountain down the hallway humming itself back to life.

This room is gigantic. The bed was high on a platform base and the room was covered in mirrors.

TONE CASUALTIES

A label, featuring unconventional sound adventures and daring endeavors in new instrumental music



INDUSTRIUM POST MORTEM: CHINA

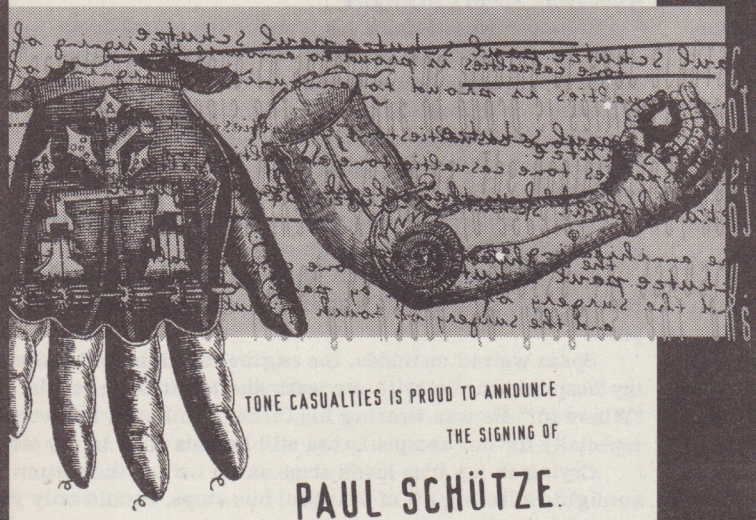
the deconstructed sounds of KAREN HAN

"...there are unexpected sound motifs that make this very compelling listening." — JAM July 1996

"Truly Amazing" — The Gavin Report July 1996

"spacious and ferocious, darkly implicative, lots of personal computerizing to dig deep into for it's sake." — LA Weekly August 2, 1996

"Alternately lovely and coldly intellectual..." — SERVO September/October 1996



TONE CASUALTIES IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE SIGNING OF

PAUL SCHÜTZE.

LOOK FOR THE RELEASE OF A LIBRARY OF CD'S, INCLUDING:

DEUS EX MACHINA,

THE ANNIHILATING ANGEL, AND

THE SURGERY OF TOUCH

AND NEW RECORDINGS

BY PAUL SCHÜTZE IN JANUARY.

FEATURING:

Mark Mothersbaugh of Devo,

Darrin Varhagen of Shinjuku Thief,

FACE featuring Paris Sedonis,

formerly of Christian Death,

Hungry Ghost, Andras Wahorn, DS Eccles,

Gabor Csupo, Eon Flux composer

Drew neumann and Opus Crobag.

WRITE FOR A FREE CATALOG AND STICKER TO:

TONE CASUALTIES 1258 N. HIGHLAND AVENUE
DEPT. BEN HOLLYWOOD, CA 90038 213 463.0145

http://www.tonecasualties.com

She never mentioned John, even though she knew, but in the end that would have been too cruel. What mattered was that she was mine then, and I hers. Nothing else.

I sucked on her dangling hair as she covered my chest with sugar winnings, and every sticky lick upwards made me want to put away the dental floss for good.

The next morning, when Melissa sleepy-dragged me back to my room, I gave her the Illyana backpack full of coin, and told her to buy some red hair dye on the outs.

Not for me, for Laura. Blue just wasn't her color.

I'll never understand why Laura turned into Frisbee, but once she did there was no stopping us. The walls dissolved, the secret blatant, and we slipped out into freedom.

Am I ahead of myself? Yes.

Day 46 was the start of the conspiracy. Only the two of us were actively involved, but Quarter, Arnold and even Towel played their parts. We all started talking in fake school, when the annoyingly nice teacher wasn't paying attention. The prevailing metaphor was basketball, as per the genius of Arnold.

"All we need is a semi-perfect pass, and then we'll both go for the sweet 3 pointer."

"But I'm already close to fouling out, and I can't risk not being there in the final seconds."

"Don't worry Doug, Laura is a good coach. She knows what she's doing."

"Can I play? I want to play, too."

"You can substitute, Clara. But first, we need to measure the courts, O.K.?"

So it was decided. After school we went down to the hoop and openly discussed our plan while we played. It actually did involve the basketball, along with a fake 8-Ball, the best intentions of Illyana, and a little help from Spazz.

The basketball was easy enough. Arnold had been trying to arrange a patient vs. staff tournament for the longest time, and somehow got it to happen on Day 68. So most of the larger doctors and nurses would be occupied on the courts while Laura and I made our move. The 8-Ball we made in activity, glazing a clay sphere the exact same size as a regulation pool one, with the expressed notion of making our own set, one ball at a time. Big Bill really thought that this was funny, which was appropriate considering what happened to it. What better way to sound the alarm than when we were already home free?

Illyana was far more problematic. She had taken the both of us as her personal charges, and Frisbee hated her because. I knew that she really thought that she was helping, what with her special gifts and heart-to-heart talks, so I felt awful to distract her the way that I did. But Clara was game, and on Day 68, during the big basketball affair, she started to freak out and kept calling for Illyana. "I'm not clean," she sobbed, and there was no way in hell that her counselor could resist. So while they had an intense one-on-one, I packed my Illyana dress with the bare essentials, left my almost full yellow card on the pillow, and met Frisbee out in the yard. We were both on 30 minute checks at this point, so no one would be looking for us anytime soon.

"Spazz'll be here in 10 minutes. He'll drive past the fence," she pointed past the youth center, "and then we start the long walk."

"This isn't going to work." Big Bill passed by, smiling. He had on his purple-intensive Hawaiian shirt, part of his extensive collection.

"And how are you ladies doing this afternoon? Enjoying the weather?"

"It's a beautiful day. Yeah." She was such a ham, but it was true. A perfect sky, with long, stretched-out clouds smeared across the light blue.

"Group today should be fun. Brenda and I have come up with some great relaxation exercises." Brenda was new - very cool, always reading Kafka, too bad I couldn't get to know her.

"Sounds fun. See you there." Frisbee took my hand, and we walked over to the courts. Arnold was putting on a real show, slamming the hell out of Bob the yo yo guard. During a quick water break he sweated over to us and gave big hugs. Surprisingly, no one complained.

"I'll come back for you. I promise." Frisbee was starting to cry, which surprised me. Arnold wiped away her tears and gave a sad smile.

"I'll be O.K. When I leave, I'll come looking for the two of you. O.K.?"

She couldn't speak, but I O.K.ed us both out of there. He went back to the game, Spazz's car drove by, and it was time.

Walked past the records building - where my life story was filed away, only I could never read it - to the pool room's sliding glass doors. Paul, the speed freak skater, used to always put band stickers on it, and they made him scratch them off weekly. That day, it was Intruder Alert! - the one with the walkie-talkie. Frisbee smiled as we entered.

Douglas was playing pool by himself, as per the plan. He gave us the fake ball off of the table, and pulled me aside quickly for one last smoky kiss. I let him, because I knew no one else would. Gave us his assurance that there would be 2 minutes until he broke the fire alarm open with his cue, and so we walked around the corner through the unlocked unit, straight to the lobby.

To the right, the central TV room and visiting area. In front of us, the hallway to our rooms and the cafeteria. To the left, the door to the outside, unguarded and wide open. Always wide open, always so bright.

We took five careful steps towards the phone booth, and gathered ourself while watching Spazz position the car. He was our ticket out of hell, but turned out to be an even worse form of torture for Frisbee. But that's for another time.

Then, on Day 68, as Clara cried and Arnold flew, we left the receiver off the hook, turned left, and walked out into the sunlight.

Ran as we crossed tree shadow. The parking lot was old and cracked, but the cars doctor-new.

Frisbee let the 8-Ball sail, and as it fractured Big Bill's Porsche, alarms went off both inside and out. Douglas did his part.

Spazz waived us inside, the engine running, and I tore off my hospital bracelet with my teeth and left it on the curb. "Where to?" He was wearing his Circle X uniform, left work especially for our escape. Laura still has his shirt in my closet.

Crying in my true love's arms as we turned the corner, the sunlight reflecting off of beautiful bus stops, I could only yell one thing:

"Just go."

In the distance were fire trucks and ambulances, fast approaching as cars swerved left and right. We waived to them as they rushed past.

They waived back.

• • •

If you got into your car and drove for five hours around Berkeley, CA, you'd probably see a whole bunch of people who might have seen Nicholas Allen Freeman once or twice.

I never have any luck tricking in this city, too bad, because this would be the best place to bring

st!m

A Webzine of Offstream Pop Culture

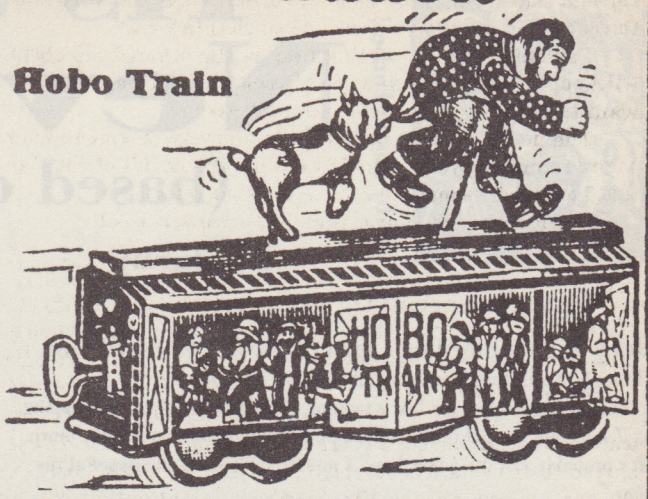
http://www.stim.com

STIM: The only website ribbed for your pleasure.

READ LURK POST CHAT

Rube Waddell

Hobo Train



Real action! See the ferocious bulldog jerk at the coat tails and pull the scared, fleeing hobo back each time, while the car goes steadily on in an endless circle. Fun Galore. **33rpm**

Rube Waddell*Hobo Train*1 sided,silk screened 12" 9 bucks Ebola Soup*7" ep*(w/ eskimo, splatter trio guys) 4bucks Giant Ant Farm *Dressed in Milk*CDEP*w/comicbook 9bucks Mumble & Peg*7" w/illustrated booklet 4bucks Eyesore: A Stab at The Residents*CD* w/33 bands doing Reztunes incl. TFUL 282, S. Ridgway, Snakefinger, Heavy Vegetable, and The Residents 15 bucks Idiot Flesh*Nothing Show*CD 12 bucks *Guide to Eyesore*7"w/non-CD tracks 4 bucks Charming Hostess *Nub City*7" 4 bucks Giant Ant Farm*Fortune*CD $12 All prices incl. postage Distributed by NAIL (888-NAILINC). Send check, money order, catalogue requests to **Vaccination Records Co.** POB 20931, Oakland, CA 94611. http://www.cris.com/~vacrec

SCREECHING WEASEL?

FAT WRECK CHORDS

art by Justin Forbes!

'Tis the Diver, Nevermore

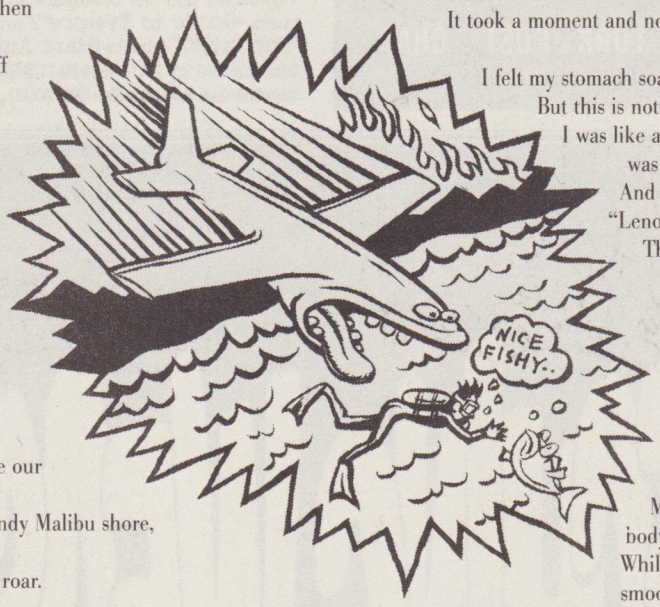
(based on a true) Sea Story

by darby

Once upon a morning's query, while I lie restless and weary,
Through the burning pondering of long lost days of yore–
A thought approached me like a tapping, a meager hint & then a rapping,
As if someone wanted to stir my napping, napping on this Sunday morn.
"It's probably just the paper boy," I muttered, "tossing the paper at my door."
I thought, "whatever" and nothing more.

Yeah, really it was corny but I was feeling kinda ornery,
So much so that I made an effort to get up from off the floor.
Because each moment I stay lying, I felt I was slowly dying
Especially with all that goddamn rapping and still it was only four (a.m.)
So I went to the door and saw it was my friend Lenore;
I thought, "What the hell!" and nothing more.

She said, "It's the day we've been jivin', when we're to go scubba diving.
You know, you remember, scuba diving off the shore!"
In my annoyed state I wished calmness, & a reprieve from the promise,
But I realized that there was nothing, nothing that would hurt her more–
Anyway, she would have kicked my ass; she's tough, Lenore.
I said, "Let's go", and nothing more.



Throughout the windy mountain passes, we were drivin' sticky like molasses,
So I stuck in the tape I had recently scored, of my favorite band Chokebore.
We sang along and did some rappin', while our hair was wildly flappin',
'Til we arrived at the scenic and quite trendy Malibu shore,
We got all the gear, the boat, the oars–
We yelled, "Tally Ho!" with a wailing roar.

Amped on the radiant beauty of the water, and a solely swimming otter,
Not to mention the ravishing curves on my money honey Lenore;
It was growing hotter by the hour, and my face did surely scour,
So we did what we had done at least a million times before;
We threw down the anchor, put on the suits, and jumped in once more.
I thought, "This is the thing I most adore."

Into the darkness of the ocean flower, I briskly felt it's rage and power,
And we swam deeper, deeper then we'd ever swam before.
Fish and sharks and creatures fluttered, all around us they sputtered,
Making our voyage blessed by a feeling we could not ignore;
This is when I realized I truely loved this girl Lenore–
But maybe it was the underwater pressure and nothing more.

Suddenly it grew even darker and the seas were spinning like a fucker,
I motioned to my Lenore, and a fear we'd never shared before.
It crossed our path like a viper, a motion I could not decipher,
And then I was torn from the depths & from my true love, true Lenore.
Calmness shook itself to horror, and to you I must implore–
It took a moment and nothing more.

I felt my stomach soaring, and I don't mean to be boring,
But this is not some rambling bit of meandering folklore.
I was like a giant fish captured, but "within what?" I was soon enraptured,
And where the hell was my girl Lenore.
"Lenore! Lenore!"
The echo of the chamber, shrieked back the sound of my true terror–
That it was I and nothing more.

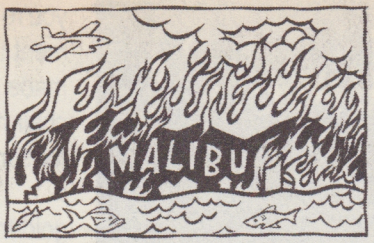
I needed desperately to know, was I in the hull of a ship, the belly of a whale, a UFO?
And even more, what the hell was that incessant roar?!
My heart was palpitating, while my whole body was gyrating,
While I tried to follow the water-filled inside's smooth contour, looking for the door.
Without much oxygen I was trying, to keep myself from dying–
It was the least I could do, and nothing more.

Time went so damn slowly, hours and days it seemed I was left only,
To ponder my life and death and wasted moments of days of yore.
It was troubling to notice, as if it was only then I could truely focus,
On how I'd always distorted what I was to the core.
But before it all came clear, I was grinning from ear to ear;
I would be free forever more.

A latch was slowly opening, and the sunlight shot in like morning;
And it tore inside my dark grim chamber

a trick. There is a faint, yet intoxicating aroma of stale poppers and one too many mudslides by

of horrors.
At last I would find, a freedom
not only of the mind,
But I had a second lease on life I
would not take for granted like
before
The door opened more and more
and more–
I was dreaming of Lenore.



The water was slowly pouring and my freedom I was so adoring,
But unexpectedly the door opened to the point there was no floor.
A rush went through my body, which made me go potty,
And before I could think I was suddenly outdoors;
Soaring through the air like a giant Condor–
My fins for wings and nothing more.

I looked up and saw my chamber horror, had been a plane full of ocean water,
High above what I now saw clearly a raging fire below.
I was a white cacasian, certainly not dressed for the occasion,
Flying through the sky at a speed that would make any man freak, including
truely yours–
"Fuck shit fuck shit fuck shit..."
It was all I could say, and nothing more.

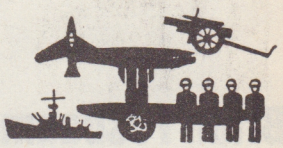
And as I decended with the water, it grew painfully hotter and hotter;
Flames licking hundreds of feet into the sky they tore.
My suit started melting, into my skin the rubber amalgamating,
All that water and now I was dry to the core–
All that water and now I was only vapor–
Burned to a crisp and nothing more.

Days later the fire ended, and with hot spots the firemen contended,
When one man noticed a strange sight and went off to explore.
As he approached the suit he started crying, 'cause the distorted scene was so
horrifying;
This twist of fate; this ultimate tale of gore.
He turned his head and blew chunks on the floor–
He threw up and went on with his chore.

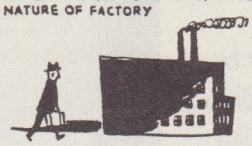
Lenore reading by the fire, try as she might not to tire,
Shakily clutching the paper in her hands as she read the headline's report,
When the reality came a-tappin', of what had really happened:
"Scuba suit found in middle of burnt forest, 50 miles from shore."
Finally she was given the truth she could not ignore;
My soul shall be lifted–nevermore!

BLUEPRINT FOR IDEAL CHERRY SMASH PROMOTIONAL PLAN

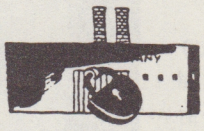
1. MUST BE UNIVERSAL
MUST INCLUDE ALL COUNTRIES
MUST INCLUDE ALL WAR POTENTIAL

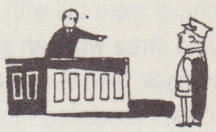


2 MUST HAVE A FOOLPROOF INSPECTION SYSTEM
NO LIMITATION AS TO TIME, SPACE, NATURE OF FACTORY
NO LEGAL LIMITATION



3. MUST HAVE PROVISIONS FOR ENFORCEMENT
POWER TO STOP PRODUCTION
POWER TO PUNISH OFFENDERS





Three vinyl products you must own:

MERINGUE
MUSIC FROM THE MINT GREEN NEST
Extra-long and extra-tasty double LP.
A musical triumph of rare beauty and depth.
The best band in the world, Meringue can
do anything and do it all here. $10 ppd. CS-35

HAZELDINE
"Tarmac" b/w "Apothecary" 7"
Girl-fronted dark country-tinged genius
Tuneful, compelling, heartrending $3 ppd. CS-37

ACTION SUITS
"Fun Flies" b/w "Before" 7"
Peter Bagge of HATE comics plays in and drew
cover for this band of pop-heroes-despite-themselves.
No one can stop humming. $3 ppd. CS-36

Check or money order
to BRIAN DOHERTY, please
Ask for free catalog of dozens
more lovely sound products

Cherry Smash
RECORDS
3322 MENTONE AVE., APT. 6
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90034

some sloppy bottoms. The smells make me swoo. I can even hear muffled moans and groans

Fesbaumer's Chair

by Eric Warren

Brian Fesbaumer, clerk for the soon-to-be prestigious law firm of Hanley and Hanley sat at his appointed place four days a week. Each of the twelve clerks at Hanley and Hanley had his own area on a long, slightly angled, wooden desk. Their chairs were tall with wooden seats and three wooden slats to support the back. The long metal legs of these chairs produced many chills in the early morning before the office was warm, if indeed it ever did warm up. In fact, the chairs were downright uncomfortable, and many of the clerks were not ashamed to say so. Brian Fesbaumer, however, believed that to complain about things showed a flaw in character and as his father told him, "Those who can adapt to a challenge without complaining will go far in life, and even further in death."

The other clerks continued to complain about the chairs, but Brian remained silent and diligent in his work. Mr. Hanley even complimented him on his character, "Fesbaumer, you're no cry-baby like these other sissies. Keep this up and you could make head clerk." This comment made Brian extremely proud and his pride reflected in his chair. As an example to the other clerks, Brian took the chair home and painted it his favorite color, green. Brian also attached a small red leather cushion to the seat.

When Brian returned to the office the following Monday, the other clerks, who seemed indifferent to Brian before, made fun of him and his chair. The clerks continued to make defamatory comments throughout the week such as referring to him as "Hanley's little helper." One particular jackass clerk, Charles Lessberger, constantly complained about the chairs and made a mockery of Brian. But Brian didn't mind, he never talked to the other clerks anyhow and Mr. Hanley was really beginning to notice him. "Fesbaumer," he said "I admire your creativity, you're quite a character." This comment topped it off for Brian. If he made even more additions to his chair he would become head clerk for sure.

That weekend Brian added gold trim; he also made a cover out of one of his mother's old dresses. Later that week Mr. Hanley announced the untimely death of Mr. Feltchbottom who previously held the position of head clerk. "We at Hanley and Hanley are sad to announce that Clerk Feltchbottom was attacked and killed by ravenous squirrels while walking through the park yesterday morning. Indeed, it has been a horrible winter."

Brian feigned sadness at the office that day, but when he got home he could hardly control himself. "We will soon be head clerk Betty," shouted Brian. Betty was the name he had given his dearest friend and companion to which he had grown so attached, his chair.

He couldn't wait to see the look on Lessburger's face when Mr. Hanley introduced Brian as the new head clerk. "The first thing I'll do as head clerk is make each clerk take his chair home and put some effort into improving its appearance," Brian said to Betty "You've helped me out so much. I think a project like that could really lift some spirits in the office."

The following week was grueling. When would Mr. Hanley announce the new head clerk? Brian took Betty home every night that week, not only for improvements such as a new paint Job and the addition of a pair of lips, but for fear of sabotage. The competition was rough and tension ran high in the office that week.

The next Monday Mr. Hanley announced that the new head clerk would be none other than Brian's arch enemy Charles Lessberger. How could this happen? Brian had worked so hard, polishing Betty so brightly that nobody could walk into the office without taking notice of her beauty. Distraught, Brian took comfort in the fact that he had Betty to keep him company, and with the addition of attachable cushions, Betty was much softer and easier to sleep with.

like people are fornicating above me and to the sides of me. I figure I'm hallucinating. Ditching

The following Monday Brian went to work, to his horror, the office had been remodeled. "How could this be!" He cried. The new desks were much shorter and the new chairs were closer to the ground and swiveled, they even had stuffing. What was he to do?

"Like the new desk Fesbaumer? It's the first thing I did to improve this place as head clerk," mocked Lessberger.

Brian didn't say a word, he merely walked over to the new desk, pushed aside the new chair and set up Betty just as he had done for the past 5 years. Without a word Brian showed up for work every day for the next 10 years, set up Betty, hunched over and went to work.

As you can imagine, Brian became quite disfigured. He even had to shave off his beard because it kept getting stuck in discarded bubble gum and other crap as it scraped along the ground. Brian was so hunched over that he once tripped four people while making a sharp turn in the street. Brian could no longer look up. He could only walk to work every morning with his face five inches from the ground. But this did not bother Brian, instead he seemed to enjoy his new view of the world. The ground was much more interesting than the world around him and besides, he found many interesting things.

On his daily walks to work, Brian began noticing small metal rods. The flat steel rods were approximately 5 to 14 inches long, about a 1/4 of an inch thick and quite worn on one end. For no reason what-so-ever Brian began collecting the rods. He seemed to find most of them on Wednesdays while walking to work, and on Thursdays while returning home. As his collection grew, he began to wonder what these strange metal rods were and what purpose they served. For, as his father always said, "Everything has a purpose in this world."

all art by Fred Hofheinz.

Then one night while Brian was stroking Betty after a particularly hard day at work, the answer came to him. "Betty, why does everybody make fun of me? I do my work diligently. I never bother anybody. Why don't they just leave me alone, why? Oh Betty! I wish I could just fly away. I love you so much." Then Brian did something that he had thought about but had never done. Holding on to Betty he reached over, placed his lips on Betty's and kissed her. The feel of Betty's wooden orifice was more tantalizing than Brian had imagined and he wondered why he hadn't done it before. Brian repeated the act continuously throughout the night. Suddenly he had the urge to smoke a cigarette. As he got out of bed en route to the tobacco shop, a beautiful voice strangely reminiscent of his mother's, stopped him in his tracks. "We can Brian. We can fly away."

"What, who...?"

"It's me Brian, Betty."

"Betty?"

"Yes Brian, kiss me I can talk."

"Heavens to Betsy, Betty. I didn't know you could talk."

"I couldn't...until your love brought me to life."

"Oh Betty."

"Now listen to me Brian, there is a way that we can be together. These small metal rods that you have been finding. They are the components of a great spacecraft which runs on telekinetic power and love. The rods you have found have been placed on earth by a great race of dilligent and disfigured workers disenchanted by the dastardly deceit of modern society. The rods can only be found by people like you. Assemble the ship Brian, and take us to Planet Caravan, get us away from this rat salad we call Earth.

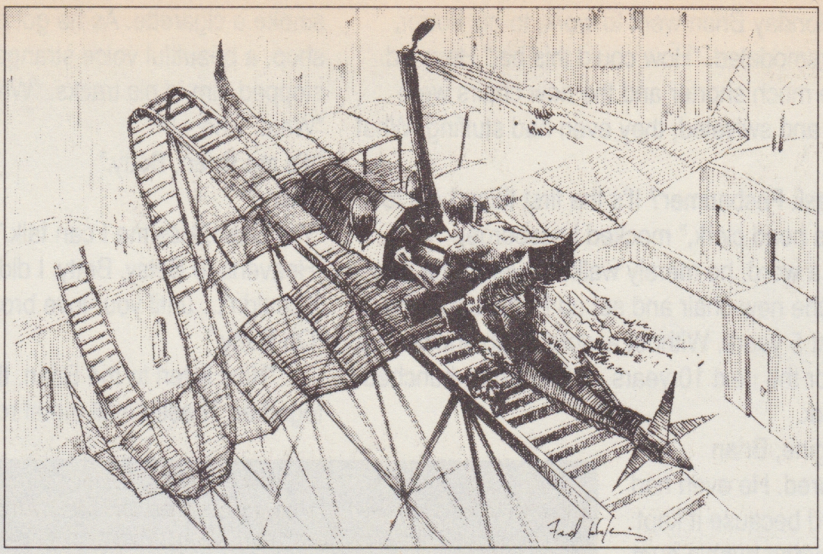
"Yes Betty! Yes I will assemble the ship!" Brian's dreams were coming true, his father was right, all events were aggregate and led ultimately to self-actualization. His time had come.

Betty continued to inform Brian of a planet, just beyond our star system, free of lazy, whining, incompetents like Lessberger. Higher intelligence such as Brian's had no place on this earth and others such as himself had tapped into the strange telekinetic power and were sending ship parts to the earth; only those observant enough to figure out that they were the componants of a telekinetic transportation device were worthy of inhabiting the planet.

Brian put aside everything and everyday after work, (Brian never missed a day) he would work on his ship as much as he could. The ship took on the form of an odd-shaped winged rocket just big enough for Brian. Betty of course made the perfect captain's chair, and a track on the roof of Brian's apartment building would be the perfect launching place.

Finally, after weeks of preparation Brian was ready for his voyage. But first he would have his revenge. That night Brian shaped and sharpened a large number of rods that he had not

used for the construction of the ship. Brian fixed Betty up with a series of spring-loaded rotating blades which would fly off of Betty's legs every time Brian kissed her luscious launching lip.



Stripped totally naked Brian sprinted with amazing speed and agility (due to the aerodynamics that his disfigured shape had provided him) to the office of Hanley and Hanley. He had been up all night and reveled in the fact that he was late for work. Fifteen glorious minutes late, ha, ha, ha.

Brian burst into the office, laid on the floor and gave Betty a series of devastating French kisses. The spring loaded blades flew helter-skelter, destroying almost every clerk and their loathsome cushy swivel chairs. Brain watched with chagrin as a particular blade struck Lessburger smack on the left temple, subsequently scrambling his frontal lobe placing him in a horrifying hallucinatory state where he was continuously sodomized by personified Lazy Boy chairs with huge red cocks.

After all of the blades had been launched, Brian stood up and examined the damage. "revenge is ours Betty!! To the ship!"

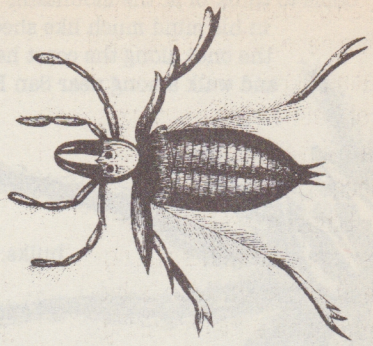
Brian ran back to his building with the same speed and agility which brought him to the office, climbed to the roof, and launched his gloriously constructed telekinetic craft. "We're free Betty, free!" yelled the disfigured man to his belovedly adorned chair as their craft of salvation plummeted to the gutter below. It was Wednesday, and from around the corner came a meter maid who calmly wrote out a ticket and placed it on the wreckage. The sign above her head read, "No parking Wednesday 7AM to 11AM...Street Cleaning."

Writer Eric Warren is currently working on a collection of small metal rods.

Artist Fred Hofheinz is working on many projects and is unavailable for comment.

in the air. The first strains of sleep begins to stir me when I begin to feel a light tickly feeling across

The Driven



by Rich Costigan

Val looked down upon the rusty Mustang's dashboard. Cracks exposed the Styrofoam underneath. The Sun's rays had long since baked it into a brittle, orange powder which seemed to dust over everything in a matter of time. He imagined the desert landscape on all sides to be composed of this, rather than the sand which was spraying through the car's side window coating the upholstery. Night was falling and the air was cooling. He had been on this stretch of highway for over an hour since his last stop in Barstow. No where in particular was his destination, but his Mustang seemed to be heading towards Las Vegas. He figured on staying in a motel once he arrived, and on exploring the outskirts of the city in the morning hours. Val hoped his friend would be home since what he had found awhile back, near Patterson's/Wright base, might be of considerable interest to him. The find remained a mystery to him. Val turned off the air conditioner. It had succeeded in blowing hot, dry air around and little more. Looking in his rearview mirror, his face appeared hollow and tight. He half admired this. It emphasized the dark, piercing nature of his eyes; a sharp contrast to his otherwise soft, saucer-like face. In the distance, the dying Sun was catching the ridges of the mountains on fire.

Val turned on the headlights, then the radio in preparation for what would be a long, nocturnal, straight drive through very bleak scenery. His back was beginning to ache again and the springs inside the seat weren't helping at all. On the radio some old Roy Orbison song, in all its melancholy glory, was becoming bathed in static fuzz fading in and out. To both sides of the highway, small shadows were playing then hiding when he tried to focus on them. Val chuckled to himself. He found it odd how, despite all its mystical glory, the moon was really nothing more than a desert; a great big one, beaming its light down upon the surface of the smaller one he was attempting to slowly cross. He conceived his car as a mini-plane gliding patiently towards a huge satellite that was pulling away.

On the backseat, overflowing with maps, loose papers and books, the inhabitant of an old shoebox was eating its way out. The other lay dead, half eaten.

Val's legs began to feel like two heavy lead pipes slowly filling up with ball bearings. His mind wandered upon the darkened mountains up ahead. Faint lights seemed to flicker like moths among the ridge's outline.

In the distance, a figure appeared which resembled some poorly built scarecrow with its thin arms outstretched flogging the air. Val refocused his eyes and in the beam of the headlights saw that it was an old man frantically waving him down. For some damn reason, the man held a top hat in one hand and a misshapen walking stick in the other. All this and the man's awkward gestures gave his skeletal appearance an almost comical look. Without thinking, Val veered his car to the side of the road, stopped, then rolled down the passenger window the squeak of it adding tension to his nerves.

The thin man had an eerie grin pasted on which made Val somewhat apprehensive as well as bewildered. He didn't think to stop, he just did and now that he was idling on the side of the road he had an urge to press on the accelerator pedal and leave.

"Hi, do you need a lift? I'm going up towards Vegas. If that's where your headed, then climb on up in the back. This front seat's pretty cluttered up as you can see. You can stretch out in the back."

"Well, thanks der son. Been out here awhile... jus' need a lift up 'round towards Baker. It's right thru, not more than...uh..ten miles... fifteen, perhaps. Been out here fer all eternity, yeah."

The old man cautiously glanced at Val, fiddled with the harness of his weathered canvas bag, then climbed inside. His black top hat placed gently upon his knee, the man rattled out a dry cough, which to Val, sounded similar to dead leaves crumbling. The car quivered then pulled off the side back onto the black top of the interstate 15.

"So, you goin' to gamble, huh..stare at them lights?"

"I don't know. I'm just going up in the area to..well...explore, get out and away from four walls and a time clock, so to speak."

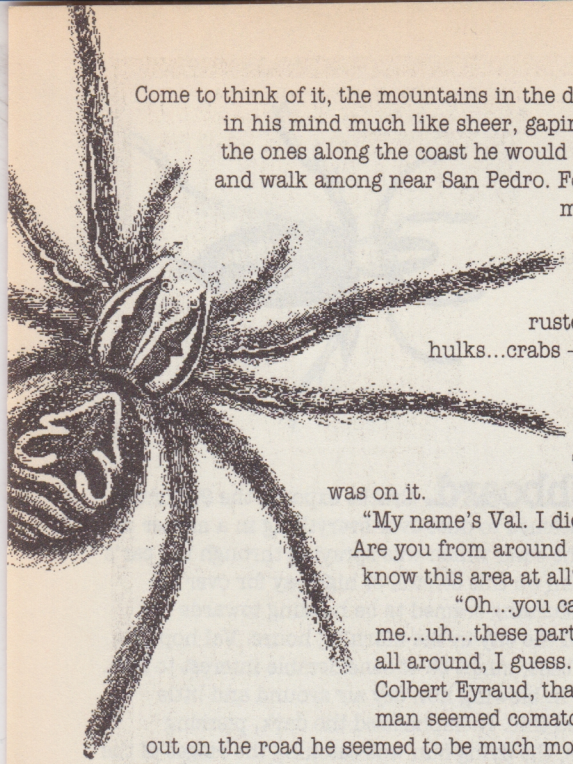
"You,..yer a geologist. Can tell by these books. What sort of thing ya think you'll find out here, anyways?"

"Oh, hell, I don't know really. It's just a pastime for now. I'm just looking for fault scarps, interesting rock formations... things like that, you know. By trade, I do aerodynamics analysis for the Pasadena Jet Propulsion Lab. Computer designs, mostly."

"I see, ...can't say I have much of a trade anymore. I'm what you'd call a collector, now. Jes' memories an people." The old man was now staring hypnotically at the windshield, as if he was studying some sort of movie. An uneasy silence passed for a couple of minutes. Val looked into the rearview mirror. The man seemed to hardly breathe or flinch. He was slowly tapping his fingers on the cardboard box. Drops of rain began to sprinkle the windshield, obscuring his vision of the road slightly.

Val took in the man's features. The oddest thing was the man's hair. It looked like a wig, a very white one at that. In fact, it seemed to glow slightly. Val thought back again to the faint lights he had noticed before above the mountain ridges. He imagined a nest of spiders lurking inside and wondered if the old man's hair would grow over his rattle-framed body, over time, like a cocoon. The man's hair had a very silky, luminescent look to it. Val lit a cigarette then lowered his window a little more. A drop of rain hit his eye. In the side of his vision, Val thought he saw a couple of spiders scurry in and out of the man's hair. The light of the moon towards his right gave a murky cast to the inside of the car, making the man's hair almost seem to move like a pile of glowing kelp out in the sea.

my butt cheeks. I'm hazily thinking to myself how wonderful; what a delight it would be to get



Come to think of it, the mountains in the distance appeared in his mind much like sheer, gaping cliff walls...like the ones along the coast he would sometimes visit and walk among near San Pedro. For a moment his mind wandered, thinking about tide-pools, sandstone, rusted out car hulks...crabs – then the box. He hoped it was secure and hadn't fallen over. The man's hand was on it.

"My name's Val. I didn't catch yours. Are you from around here? Do you know this area at all?"

"Oh...you can call me...uh...these parts? Yeah but I'm all around, I guess. I go by Eyraud. Colbert Eyraud, that's Indian." The man seemed comatose now. Before out on the road he seemed to be much more animated.

"Tis box here, right by me...mind if I take a look?"

"No, wait a minute. Take this flashlight, don't let them out. They can move pretty damn quick, so please...."

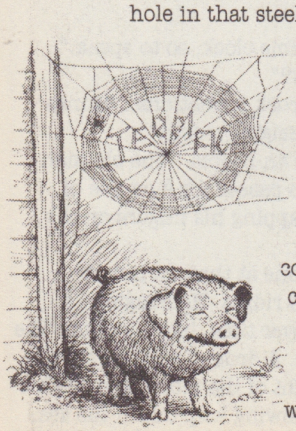
Val turned off the radio. He was picturing Colbert accidentally dropping it, which would be a big mistake if they got out. He was sorry he had only a shoebox to contain them in.

"Where in Hades ya find these? Never seen anything like 'em about here. You ain't some kinda Dr. Mabusa, are ya?"

"You've never seen anything like this anywhere?"

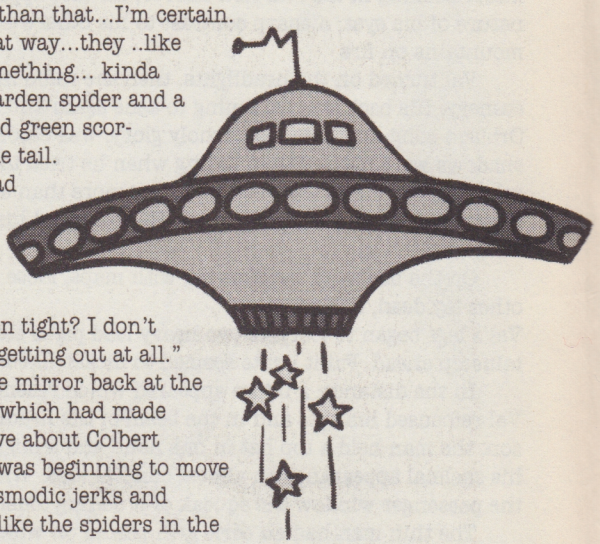
"I jes' never looked...wouldn't want to, now that I've seen these damned things. Where they from again?"

"Oh...about 4 p.m. today, I got out near Lancaster...near the airbase...Patterson, I think. I made a pit stop off a side road, near the main one, to piss on the side of this old, empty barracks building...also wanted to stretch out so I did some walking around. Well, anyways, as I went into this other structure...it was concrete bunker of some sort, off the dirt path a quarter mile up...I saw a tangled web of these, off in the side corner in one of the lower rooms. What that place was used for, I have no clear idea. I saw, in some rooms, a lot of rusted cables, transformer units, generators, several large vats half full of some type of mildewy amber gunk.... I couldn't make any sense out of what it might've pertained to. It was obviously a part of the air-base facilities at some point in time...the largest room had some sort of tunnel access which was welded and riveted shut. The flashlight I had wasn't very bright, but when I shined it through a small port hole in that steel door...what I saw, I didn't like at all. I couldn't see through the hole very well since it was so small and the flashlight was starting to die...the tunnel was large enough to drive this car through...anyway, when I looked through I saw what appeared to be a cluster of a dozen of these cinder cone type objects covered in webs along the floor. I could only see about twenty or so feet down, but past these cones the webs grew much denser so that it was almost like looking at a soft, white wall. The ceiling, floors and walls were all covered and so were those cones...they had to be about three feet high..., which I guessed to be the homes of these spiders maybe. When I stared a little longer...my eyes took it all in a little better...I started to slowly make out the outline of a human shape, ever so slightly past that overgrown shield of webs. At that point I saw a mass of these things streaming out of the cones going towards the sides and walls. A split moment, before I got the hell out of that damn place, I swear to you,..and all mighty god..,that whatever that figure was, human or otherwise, was drifting right through those webs toward the double welded door I had been peering through.



"The icing on all this was the sound that I heard briefly right when I turned away to get the hell out. That sound, I will never forget. It was like the sound of a squeegee on a window crossed with crickets chirping inside an old man gasping on his deathbed,.. for lack of a better way of describing it. Mind you, I just caught it in my ears for a fraction of a moment, running out of that room, but I felt as if that sound stuck itself on me like glue and would stick me down in that bunker like flypaper. The two I got, I found in the shack up in the corner...the one I parked near...where I peed. What do you make of this? I swear it's all true, as closely as I can recall."

"I won't doubt it...the desert's seen stranger things than that...I'm certain. They all look that way...they ..like scorpions or something... kinda crossover of a garden spider and a bright yellow and green scorpion..without the tail. Looked like it had a stinger though,.. a nice sharp black one."



"Is the lid on tight? I don't want those two getting out at all." Val looked in the mirror back at the man. One thing which had made him apprehensive about Colbert was the way he was beginning to move in epileptic, spasmodic jerks and twitches, much like the spiders in the box appeared to move.

"You know, looking back now, none of what happened to me back there seems real at all,..maybe my mind played tricks on me inside there from road strain. It just,.. none of it makes any sense. It had to have been my imagination spilling out from looking at a straight road too long under that boiling sun."

Colbert said nothing. He was passed out on the back seat. Val repositioned himself in his seat and stared straight ahead towards the mountain range in the approaching distance, the ones that had reminded him of cliffs. A sharp pain shot through the base of his neck. Val saw two bright, white lights heading down upon him. The blast of a horn cut through the air. In a quick moment the sound from the tunnel flooded his mind. Val began to black out. The sound grew louder, the lights softer. If he had turned around, he would've realized why Colbert said nothing. He wasn't there. A large mass of spiders were spreading throughout the Mustang, covering the back-seat and windows in a sea of glowing brightness.

Rich Costigan, otherwise known as Polysorbate 60, is to fire what the spider is to a web.

manhandled tonight. My thoughts stray to getting a real hornpig who would really appreciate

AK PRESS AUDIO AND EPITAPH PRESENT

BETTER READ THAN DEAD

A BENEFIT FOR AK PRESS

"ANARCHISM. It's basically the common-sense idea that the world would be a better place organized without hierarchy, domination, authority and exploitation...and a means of getting from here to there. AK Press is an attempt at being part of that process"
- Ramsey Kanaan,
Founder AK Press.

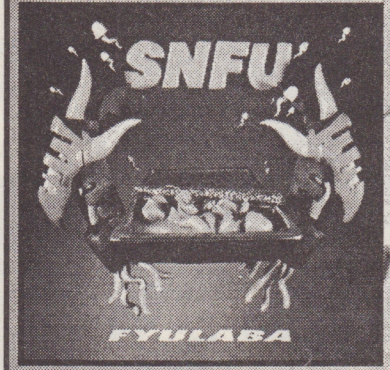
Contains 22 donated tracks; including songs from: NOFX, Propagandhi, Zoinks, Napalm Death, The Levellers, Wayne Kramer, Chumbawumba, J Church and many more.

Full AK Press catalog on Enhanced CD and full catalog book in LP.

AK PRESS AUDIO
2798 SUNSET BLVD
LOS ANGELES, CA
9 0 0 2 6
Epitaph

SNFU

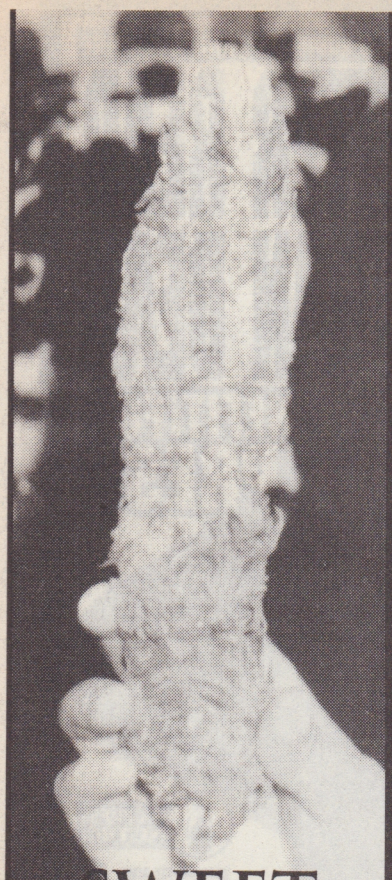
New Album
FYULABA
(Few Lahbah)
LP/CS/CD



What the HELL does that mean?!?
Write to Epitaph and find out
c/o Dept. FZ, 2798 Sunset Blvd.
LA, CA. 90026

Epitaph

To hear songs from this album dial (213) I-OFFEND, code #s 7201 & 7202



SWEET DREAMS

ALL RELEASES HAVE A LIMITED EDITION FOR MAILORDER ONLY!

SEVEN INCH RECORDS ARE $3 FOR THE USA AND $5 FOR THE REST OF THE GLOBE.

MONEY ORDERS OR CASH TO "RHETORIC". STORES, WE DEAL DIRECT.

SEND TWO STAMPS FOR A HUGE MAILORDER CATALOG WITH TONS OF STUFF!

MAIL GOES TO PO BOX 82, MADISON, WI 53701.

OR YOU CAN FAX US AT 608.259.0803

HURRY, THESE ARE LIMITED EDITION!

BONGZILLA

JOLT

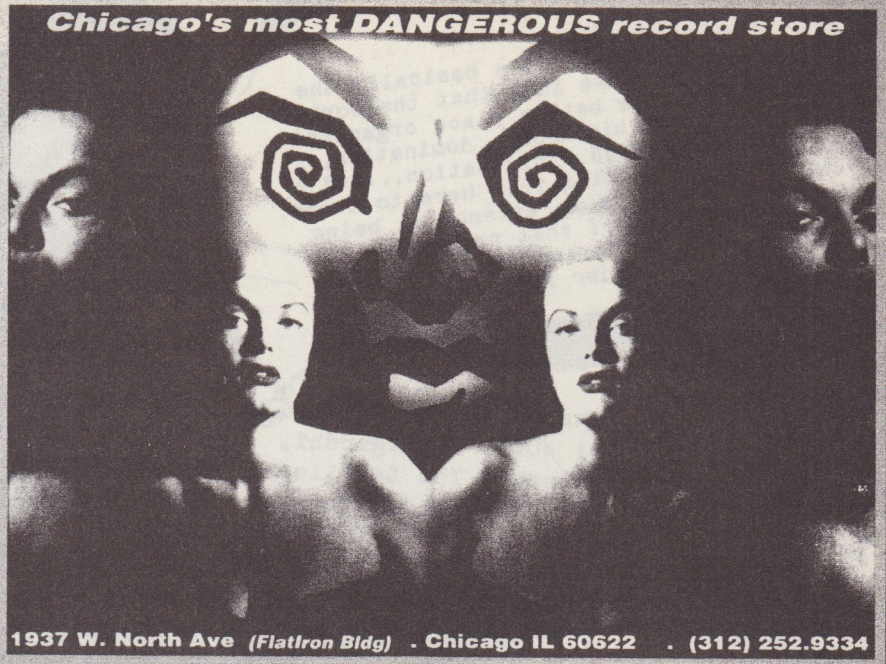
MULLIGAN STU/TEEN IDOLS

LESS THAN JAKE

RHETORIC RECORDS
PO BOX 82. MADISON, WI 53701

THE QUAKER GOES DEAF

Chicago's most DANGEROUS record store



1937 W. North Ave *(Flatlron Bldg)* **. Chicago IL 60622 . (312) 252.9334**

WEBpage / MailOrder: http://www.mcs.com/~quaker/

New & Used imports and indie label domestic releases, and rare / collectible music & artifacts . CDs, vinyl, videos, cassettes, magazines, books, posters... Free search / special order service. Listen before you buy .Open thru midnight (except 8 on Sunday) w/ friendly help in an over-the edge atmosphere

S8 K22 O4 L11 D10

"POWER,
MONEY,
HOLYROADS,
INFORMATION OVERLOAD,
LEAVE ME IN THE BITTER
COLD TO DIE."

THE SELF-TITLED DEBUT
ALBUM FROM SKOLD

66579-2/4

To receive some cool free SKOLD stuff in the mail, send an e-mail, with your name and address to:
freestuff@skold.com

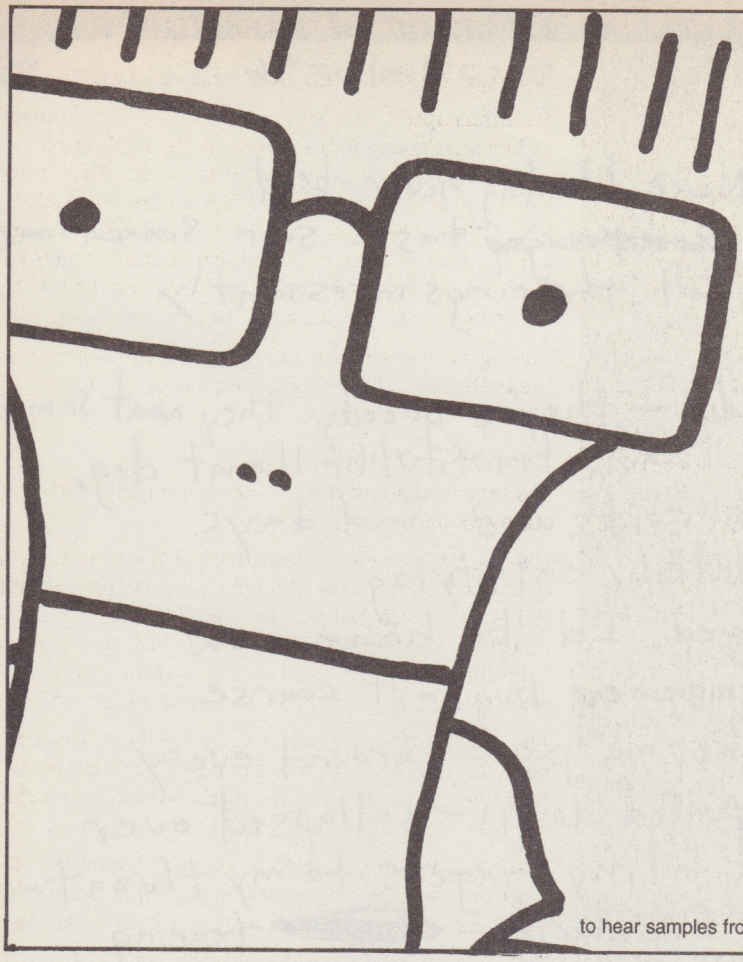
RCA
THE RCA RECORD LABEL

1-16-96

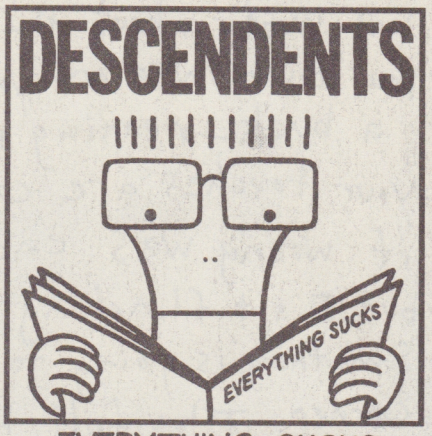
Fuck you

I'm starting at the end Never bleeding never bend
over your eyes like apples ~~[illegible]~~ taste sour Sometimes
I look at myself like a bell that rings incessantly
inside
Don't wonder about the insides — they're greedy they want so much
your touch who are you a lizard, a beautiful brilliant dog,
a buck-running over rocks and Sad days.
your touches are completely satisfying
if wrong was encouraged Id be home now
but I sit flinching at imagined bugs-of coarse
Something is going to make me pay — around every
corner. The felt hat pulled down — collapsed over
his ears he takes his filthy fingers to my throat-
my soft skin pulls like a fire alarm — ~~[illegible]~~ tearing
slightly. I have been anticipating this damaged freak for so long.
Things like this don't happen to me anymore. Back then I
deserved it. ~~I was~~... This man doesn't know me, yet
he takes every permission I have granted all life-long
and rolls them into one giant Christmas
present to himself from On High. He feels his
newly aquired doll — what facial expressions - what
a realistic fighting girl she is — thank you
for the excellent Christmas gift - the best ever.
And I know that he is ultimately correct. I am
the best - right out of the box — I snapped to
attention before I could spell my name I was
ready - I was built to please this fucking
prick and every other. ~~[illegible]~~ I am the best. I'll
love you <u>any way you want</u>. 10 bucks. No bucks.
<u>I'll pay you</u>. Use your strength. Use your smarts.
Break out the heavy artillery. Hold me. Stop me. Try to hold
me. I want you. But in the end, I always get away.

Darby. This is some things from my notebook. Love, Carla B



NEW RECORD



EVERYTHING SUCKS

to hear samples from this record dial (213) I-OFFEND , codes 8101 & 8102 Epitaph

Total Chaos

new release on cd, lp, cassette

Epitaph

To hear samples from this record call (213) I-OFFEND, code #'s 7101 & 7102

ANTHEMS FROM THE ALLEYWAY

Dreams of rushing water, vacation, & far-off waterfalls

are interrupted. She is not dead at all. She wakes up in her own apartment startled at the light from under the bathroom door in front of her. Had it just come on? She always turns it off before bed, but tonight she's been so fucked up. No idea of the time, but there are noises from the street and the neighbors' TV across the hall. Then she clearly hears the water again. The water's running in the toilet.

The light moves under the door. A man steps out of the bathroom. He is wiping his hands on neatly pressed khaki slacks.

"No towels," he says.

His face is shadowed by a wide-brimmed hat like a state trooper's.

Her mouth is open to scream, but it's just not going to happen. She knows she is being arrested for drugs in her blood. He just stands there. Thinking? She imagines. Perhaps they are both in the wrong place. A terrible mistake. So fucked up — how could she, after giving up — still be raped and murdered?

The water continues running in the toilet. She can hear the talk show across the hall. The stranger's name is embossed on a wood-grained plastic badge, but it is too dark to read.

"I see you looking at my name badge," he says. "I might as well tell you now that Sterling is my first name, since many people assume it is my last. As you can see, I'm with the Park Service."

He walks toward the foot of Cheryl's bed, moving carefully to avoid the strange black lumps which weren't there before. He stops to pick one up.

"Let me put your mind at ease," he says. "These are only pine cones. All that spiky wood is just Mother Nature's way of protecting the seeds."

He gingerly sets the pine cone on the blanket next to her. "I hope you're feeling better." He handles the cone like a bomb that could explode. Her eyes fill up with tears.

A dark green smell has crawled out of the pine cone into her blanket. Cold like mud and then hot like a rock in the sun. Like Utah, for instance. Pine needles hard to pull out of socks. Lying down, lying down, lying down, lying down — it's her breath steadying now — flowing smoothly like water, a stream, the sound of the toilet. All the drugs flushed away.

"I know that you're in no shape to go out and see Nature for yourself, so I'm bringing a little of it to you. I understand that for some city people it's very difficult. The forest seems millions of miles away. I've been on so many trains and busses today that I can almost understand the feeling."

She listens. She can't exactly hear his voice, because of these other things: wherever these pine cones came from, the distraction of her tears. If he came to kill her, then this would make all things so precious. She would want to grasp them like the pine cone. She would see miracles everywhere. Unbelievable things would be visible. Unbelievable things might

happen. A park ranger might be seen deep in the city miles from a tree, sitting on the subway with his hat in his lap and his lunch in a brown bag. Coming to kill her.

"Someday you should see it for yourself," he says. "I mean, the stars at night. And you should hear the pines swaying in the wind. The tree trunks groan. Our forest animals are innocent. A big wolf will come right down into a campsite and eat cheese out of your hand; the children feed it to him. Then he'll get sick and die. Pretty soon his body will rot away. He'll return to the earth. Back into the arms of Mother Nature. But for many people it's not that easy."

He is standing close but is still silhouetted in the bathroom's light, his arms folded as he speaks. She can smell the vomit from the bathroom and thinks of the rotting wolf, the starving pups, the gleeful children, the precious warmth licked out of their hands. 'Till a cold moon goes up in her head. A lake freezes so solid that no one can drown. She goes deeper into the blankets, aware now that she is naked and precious too. Her brain is freezing, frozen, and she wants to press herself on the sunny rocks on vacation in Utah.

"You see I'm a Native American, so I have an advantage. My people lived close to nature for centuries. We observed its ways and passed on its lore. That's why I come as a teacher, because I have that advantage. It's in my blood, like I was saying. Actually many Americans have a fair trace of Native American blood in them. They mixed with the pioneers. It's something to be proud of, that blood, but my mother was ashamed. She bleached her hair and the hair of her children. I bleach it still to honor her memory, even though I hated her. It is practically white, but instead it is silver. That's why they call me Sterling."

"I'm sick," Cheryl cries.

"Look," he says.

He takes off his hat to show her his hair. It is the color of frost, thin and fine. Now in the light, he looks familiar, like an actor from TV, like someone who might have played an Indian without being one. As he bends forward to show his hair, she picks up the scent of an old-fashioned cologne. It hits her like smelling salts, and suddenly she knows she isn't really sick, not like when she passed out.

He quickly replaces his hat.

"That's Bayberry you smell. I put a drop or so in the crown of my hat every morning to keep me feeling well-groomed. Some of my work involves dealing with things that don't smell quite as pretty as that, so Bayberry is my answer. Tell me, have you ever been to North Carolina? Anywhere near Raleigh?"

She shakes her head. It loosens her neck. She is getting better. He is not a cop. He is barely real. Just a lot of talking. And now she understands that she can just watch him. As if he's far away, or boxed up in a little TV.

"The Carolina pines are well-known. They just stand there all day and watch the sun move. That is the kind of tranquillity you'll find there. It will make you feel clean and healthy. Get it all out of our system. Once, I was like you. I wanted to get it all out of my system. Once I stood in a crystal mountain spring with the icy water halfway up my thighs, and masturbated. When the semen came out, I saw a fish swim up just like that and swallow it. It would have been too cold for the tiny sperm to survive that water, but Mother Nature sent the fish. I wanted to follow it and see where it went, but I slipped on the stones when I tried to follow him downstream. I could have died, you know. In the middle of the woods. With my pants down."

She draws her arms up under the sheets and the pine cone rolls into the tent she makes, its spores invading her thighs like fleas. Her skin itches and burns. Or maybe it's just the thought of spores, her imagination only wanting to get up and go outside.

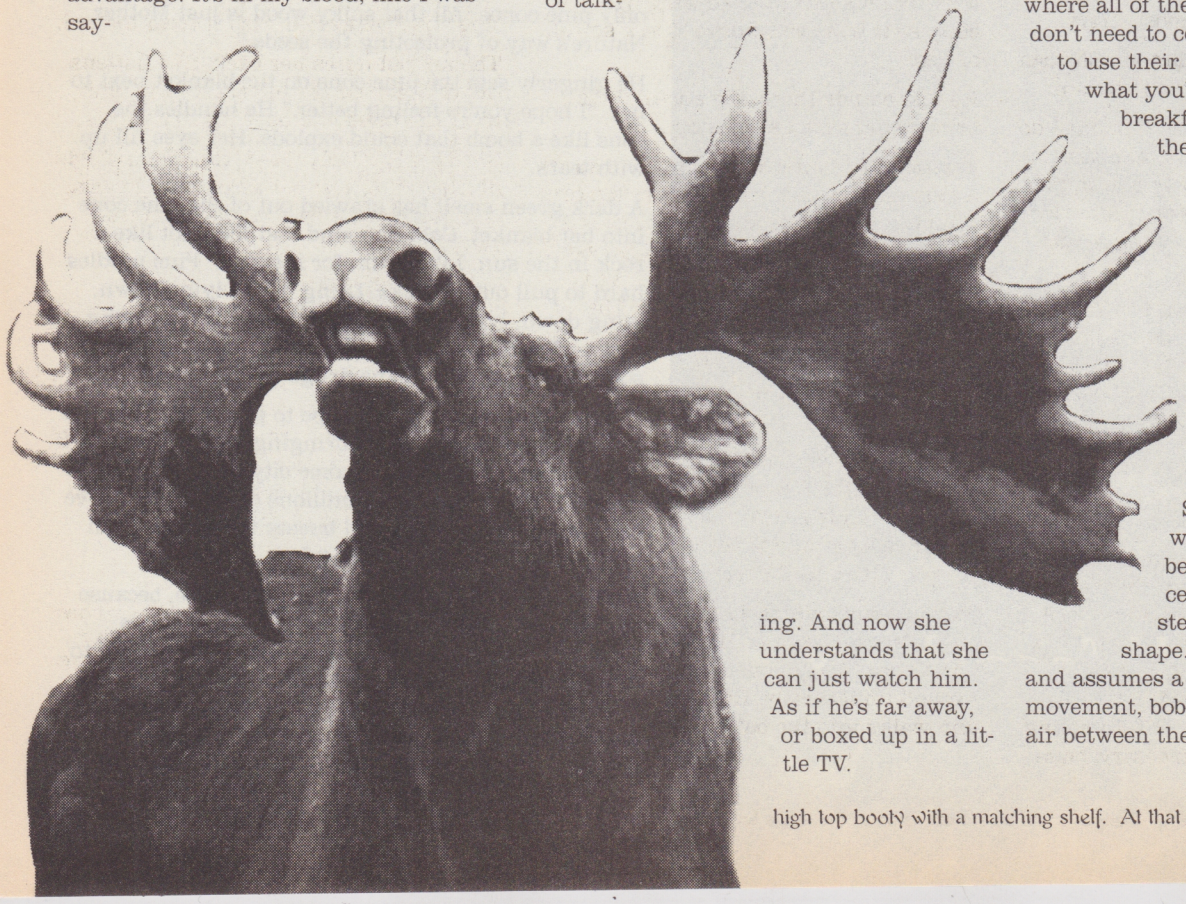
"Please forgive me if I embarrassed you with this story. I see that you're blushing."

The sound of water from the bathroom now seems louder than any noise her toilet ever made. It sounds like water splashing in the tub. He follows her distracted glance.

"I suppose there is a raccoon in that room washing his paws. These animals are compulsive about cleanliness. I bathed this morning in the dormitory where all of the rangers live together. I don't need to come into strangers' homes to use their bathing facilities if that's what you're thinking. We have breakfast and then we bathe at the ranger dormitory. We do things just like everybody else."

"Are you from Television?" she asks. "An actor?"

He frowns, and then looks over toward the window. The curtains are writhing and there's a noise like paper caught in a fan. Something comes whirling out and bounces between the corners of the ceiling. Sterling gazes steadily at the buzzing shape. It slowly draws closer and assumes a more regular course of movement, bobbing up and down in the air between the two of them.



high top booty with a matching shelf. At that moment what started as a slight

"This is a hummingbird. You should be able to tell by the vertical movement. Only hummingbirds can fly up and down like that, Cheryl. It's probably looking for nectar, though I don't know of any around here."

She catches an oily green glimpse of malevolent eye and beak between the smear of wings. Her vision blurs, and she feels that sudden need to go out and gulp the fresh night air.

"I have honey in the kitchen," she whimpers.

Sterling looks down the hall toward the kitchen. "Honey isn't nectar, and all the lights are off down there. It would get lost in the dark. This is a bird, not a bat. It cannot see in the dark. It cannot find its way with sonic signals like a bat can. It will go into the bathroom because that's where the light is. Like a moth, not a bat. This is a bird not a moth. Certainly not a bat. Hummingbirds seek out the light. Bats fear the light because they are creatures of darkness. Moths catch on fire, but birds will not. It's not in their nature."

The bird rises and falls in the air in front of them like a picture slipping on TV. They both watch it in silence for a moment.

"You've been using the water sounds to keep me hypnotized," she says. "And now you're using this bird. You're trying to keep me calm, but I don't know why. You're from Television somewhere." She feels that prickling sensation again, black crawling spores. She is almost angry.

The bird flits into the bathroom. She can hear it rattling in the shower curtain.

"I'm not from television, Cheryl, but I do enjoy certain things television makes available. And I can see why you might think this is about television and water because they both flow around us, and they can soothe us."

He sits down on the bed next to her, folding his hands in his lap. His weight draws the blanket tighter. She is glad to feel it. She is glad he is not a ghost.

"Drugs and alcohol aren't the answer, Cheryl. You need to love yourself."

She wants to tell him that she knows this in a way, that Utah is the answer. Perhaps even Carolina. These boys, these trail guides she would find, they would take her close. Even the Mormon ones pretending to get lost down by the waterfall, and then getting her alone — they were so sweetly stupid. Brave Indian Chief Talk-Her-Ear-Off, fumbling through his nature documentary, baits her animal snarling with the need to shove his nose into it, rub the stink of Mother Nature into his green Peter Pan beardlessness. Right or wrong, it was Sterling's fault for pointing it out.

"It's time for *the Andy Griffith Show*," Sterling says.

"But that show isn't on any more."

"It's on."

"No, it's not. Not even in reruns."

Sterling says nothing. She can no longer hear the bird, but she can see the light from the bathroom flickering, casting birdwing shadows all over the room. She has crushed the pine cone under the blanket without having been aware of it. Her skin must be crawling with spores, with fleas, and woodlice.

Sterling is standing up. She cannot see his face, but senses something awful in the angle of his hat brim.

"It's off the air, Sterling." She feels as if her brain is beginning to thaw. "*Andy Griffith* is not on anymore. *Mayberry, R.F.D.* is."

"Bayberry, Cheryl." I'm not talking about that now."

"'Mayberry,' I said!"

"Yes, near Raleigh."

"You could watch that program. *Mayberry, R.F.D.* Not now, but sometime. I know it's on, but I won't watch it. It's not real. There's nothing real about these shows! And *Andy Griffith*? They took that show off the air long ago because it was even worse, it was so full of lies!"

He just stands there, the angle of the brim rising slow as the moon.

The rattling in the shower curtain starts again, and she thinks she hears the bird slapping into porcelain and wonders if there's blood. A sound like that, so savage and meaty. Impossibly loud even over the constant rush of water. The noise is appalling. Perhaps there are raccoons, a whole family of them. Why not when there were pine cones from nowhere.

"You're not hypnotizing me with that Andy Griffith! You're not going to waste my time! Andy Griffith is off the air!" She shrieks at him to drown out the noises. "Cancelled! Forever!"

Sterling suddenly looks ill. "I have to go to the toilet," he says. He takes a deep breath and his silhouette seems to expand unnaturally. He quickly turns and walks into the bathroom.

Can you see spores? She has to. She rips the blankets away from her body. The whole room seems to be wriggling with them, responding to this naked flesh across her bed. She is triumphant. And now that she's done this, now why not walk naked across the room to get the TV Guide? She could just stand there in the middle of the room naked, reading television listings at the top of her lungs, even fingering herself while she did. She could go to the kitchen to get honey in which to preserve the dead bird. But she doesn't do any of these things. She just lies there absorbed in the pulsing of the blood, the torrential nonsense babbling from the bathroom.

"Come here," she says.

It blacks out the lighted doorway and pushes into the bedroom. A towering shape, a moose, walks toward her, splintering the pine cones beneath its hooves. Antlers drag against both walls, seem to almost wrap the room. The animal is wet and shimmering, streaming water and twinkling like a constellation of stars. Steam rises from its back. It lowers its head and stands there. In a matter of seconds the scent of the beast hits her, runs over her like a tide. It raises its antlers as if watching the tide ascend the bed and roll up toward the ceiling. The whole room seems greased with musk. She thinks of Sterling's bayberry-scented hat, and begins to laugh. The moose is dropping feces on the carpet. The giant head is pushing closer, dribbling warm water on her feet.

"Sterling," she cries, rising from the bed.

The animal noses her back. She flattens out and grasps the bed posts, pushing with her heels and opening her thighs.

She sees it clearly. Dead animals in fields of flowers, cheese squeezed out between the fingers of a fist, a soft child being eaten by fish.

"Sterling!" she cries again.

A huge tongue drops out of his mouth and falls like a boiled oyster between her legs. She closes her eyes and listens to the sound of those giant nostrils blasting hot air against her, the furiously running water, and the sound of the neighbor's TV — faint dialogue between a whiny-voiced man and a drunk named Otis.

✦ ✦ ✦

Rev. Al Cacophony is known for his activities as a prankster, pyromaniac, Klown, esotericist, connoisseur of bad wine and bad culture, infiltrator of cults, and expert fabricator of mummies. He is most revered in is role as Grand Instigator of the Los Angeles Cacophony Society (cacofony@address.net).

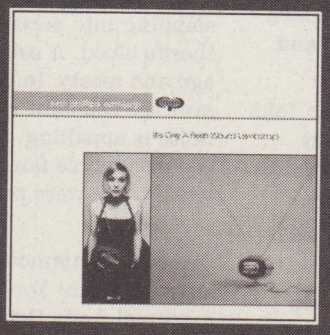
tickle across the side of my rump changes to an actual lick around the ledge leading to my sphincter.

FOUR YOUR YEARS

KRISTEN BARRY
THE BEGINNING. THE MIDDLE. THE END.
featuring "Created"

BRENDAN BENSON
ONE MISSISSIPPI
featuring "Sittin Pretty"

SAM PHILLIPS
OMNIPOP
featuring "Power World"



PLUTO
featuring
"When She Was Happy"

To receive some cool swag related to these new releases, please fill out this coupon and return it to:
FOR YOUR EARS ★ VIRGIN RECORDS ★ 338 N. FOOTHILL ROAD ★ BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90210

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... STATE ZIP

E-MAIL ADDRESS ..... DATE OF BIRTH

3 FAVORITE MAGAZINES .....

DO YOU OWN: ☐ VCR ☐ TURNTABLE ☐ PONY Swag available while supplies last

©1996 Virgin Records America, Inc.

http://www.virginrecords.com

VOTE VIRGIN

MY FIRST MEMORY

BY DARBY

It was my first memory. No, actually my first memory was of riding my Big Wheel outside of our New Jersey home until it started raining and I rode back into the garage, where mom and dad were waiting in the doorway to shut the garage door behind me. My mom probably going on about how it was "gushing" outside. But masturbating comes in at least a close second.

When people, okay *girls*, claim they didn't masturbate – or didn't even have an orgasm – until later on in life, I don't know what to say. How can I relate? What were they doing all that time? What were they waiting for? For once I might be able to think I had the inside scoop, since usually I'm the last to know. How did I know? How did I come to find, at three years of age, something that would satisfy a desire I hadn't even a mind to formulate. Was I just hooking on to that primal urge because I was so open and explorative? Or was I just prematurely twisted and in need of a more heavy-duty-type pacifier.

I'm naked. There's a big slide and I'm forced to go down it, legs first. I'm pushed down and moving erratically so my legs are sorta spread open. And as I fall down this slide these men, like robot men, come out from hidden areas off to the side (it's dark there – I think they're popping out of little doors strategically placed along the route). And they have cakes and fruit juice and syrups and whipped cream, and these things are being smashed between my legs and up up far up me as I descend upon them. Sometimes the slide slows down, so more dastardly things are done to me with these foods.... It's not too nasty though – I'm still an innocent little girl!

There are subtleties in things that adults don't notice but that are everything and more to a child. In this case it happened to me with a very innocent cartoon:

I couldn't believe my eyes. I was sitting there, giggling, in disbelief that this was being shown on TV. Porky Pig naked!!! It was so intense, so outright sexy. I mean, you must have seen it. It was the one where Porky is fishing, and the much more intelligent fish pulls him off his boat and down into his underwater world. Where the fish then proceeds to strip Porky, season him, and flop him out on the frying pan all ready to cook. If that doesn't make you tingle down there I don't know what will!

I guess a lot of my fantasies concern food. See there was also that episode of Bugs Bunny where he stews the two French chefs (or were they Italian?)...mmm.

When my parents had another kid I thought it pretty exciting. But my sister Dena grew up into a nosy younger sister, who liked to imitate me – which I liked except in certain instances. She probably doesn't remember, that she would ask me all the time what I was actually doing when I was making such a commotion under the covers. Hard not to notice when we had to share a room much of our childhood. I remember the first time she asked, when I thought somehow that I was being discrete, and my heart stopped, my whole secret world exposed. My mind reeled with the repercussions; I practically went to the gas chamber and back with guilt and fear. But sometimes in these emotional life and death situations you don't think, you just react. You respond in a way your mind could never even come up with. So that critical day I turned to her and casually said what I would say again and again as the years went by, "I'm rubbing my belly." She later tried to rub her belly like me, but didn't get the thrill I was getting out of it, so she quickly dropped it. She surely preferred imitating the way I ate Ding-Dongs.

So one day, when I'm about eight, I decide, after much deliberation, that I'm going to find out if anyone else out there does it. I mean, as far as I can tell I'm quite alone in this. And I still don't know if it's *bad*. Unlike sucking my thumb, no one's even lead on that I might get the equivalent of a thumb full of pepper if I don't stop doing it (little did they know I was a switch-hitting thumb sucker). So I'm at my friend's apartment and, after much deliberation, I decide that this is going to be the big day. Before we even start in on that kid-sized toy kitchen she has set up in her room, I blatantly climb atop her bed, grab the blanket between my legs and ask, "Do you do this?" She cocks her head to try to get a better look-see. When I realize it's completely foreign to her I feel the blood rush to my head. I *am* alone!!! I quickly adjust myself and use my fallback story, "You know, rub your belly." "No," she replies, obviously confused. I jump off the bed, immediately try to change the subject, and hope she doesn't ever bring it up again – and that is when I make a vow to myself never to mention what I do to any other living soul!

There was only one way I liked to do it: lying down on my stomach, pillow or blanket beneath me, the edge of it between my legs, grab my hands underneath it and rub. It wasn't just the only way I *liked* to do it, but the only way I *could* do it. Therefore I found myself in strange situations trying to accomplish my goal. We'd have big holiday dinners at friends' or relatives' houses and I'd run off to the bathroom to spread their towels across the tile floor (if it wasn't carpeted), a special one positioned just right. Bathrooms, closets, garages, anything that could hide me for a few moment's time. Any space big enough to fit my scrawny body lengthwise.

I'm like, am I feeling what I'm feeling? Bizarre. I've been treated to rimming many times so I

In the middle of the driveway and parking area below our apartment complex was where the trash bin was located. Somehow (I don't remember how) I'd be thrown into it. Either I was naked or my clothes would be coming apart. The trash bin was always filled to the rim with rotten foods and slosh and slime. As need-be the story would grow longer to the point I'd be inside when the trash got picked up, and would be then dumped into the larger trash truck, to be hauled away, while I plotted useless plans for my escape.

This worked until I realized there were trash compactors in the trash trucks and couldn't logically figure it into the fantasy.

When I couldn't get Derek, the cutest boy in my elementary school, off my mind, I masturbated to the idea of him getting hit by a car in front of my house. Usually I need to be the victim to get off, but this fantasy was so unattainable I made an exception (anytime I thought about me getting hit by a car and him saving me, it didn't go over). It'd be a hit and run, and I'd rush outside and find him lying bloody in the road. Easily I'd carry him inside to the living room couch, where I'd tend to his wounds or whatever but that part would be quick, 'cause he'd soon wake up and smile and we'd kiss and I'd take care of him and nurse him back to health and he'd love me forever.

I didn't get kissed until sixth grade, and that's only because my best friend was the school slut. When she eventually made fun of my mom being short by standing on her knees to talk to her – and I got moved to the smarter kids class 'cause we got into too much trouble – we didn't hang out together much, and I didn't get kissed any more. But despite it I had a deep and rich sex life. I mean, in a sense, by that point, I was well-advanced beyond most of my peers.

It was so exciting the day I discovered the stack of *Playboy's* in my dad's closet. It was like finding a buried treasure. I was home alone and had about an hour to dig through them. Like a snapshot in my mind I can still visualize the exact photo spreads. There was this one of a lady firefighter, holding the big hose between her legs, naked with the fireman hat on. Man! And some other photo essay with captions, of a woman at home, and her girlfriend comes over, and somehow they end up undressing each other and going at it, in that soft-core *Playboy* way. I even remember that article on Abraham Lincoln, which had much more interesting information than all the books I had to read as research for a report due for history class.

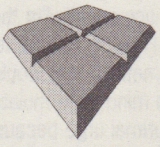
Mom walked in on me so many times it was nice she was in denial about this as well.

Does anyone really wonder why it's so common for boys to talk about masturbation, that they're practically abnormal if they *don't* masturbate, but that it's still an issue for girls and women. Judy Blume didn't even write about it. That Judy Blume felt she could write about a young male's "wet dreams" and not about girls' masturbatory urges really shows the effect of society's denial on us women. Why wasn't there a good Jewish girl character with a big nose that liked to masturbate better than having boyfriends. Okay, I'll write it for you Judy.

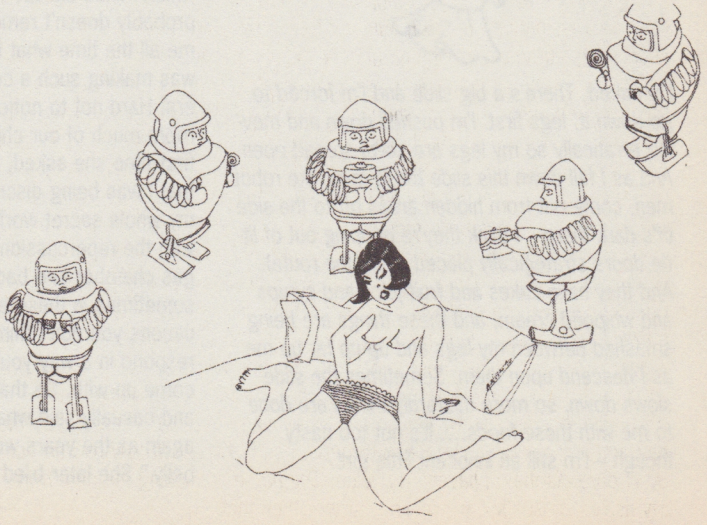
Working on the Sex Issue of *Ben Is Dead*, doing the vibrator reviews, going to Good Vibrations...opened doors, to actually achieving an orgasm while being with a man by presenting masturbation in a new light. In real life sex, the orgasm itself rarely competed. Only on one fateful day, when I put two and two together and masturbated *while* having sex, did I realize I could enjoy both worlds at once. And finally I felt that release *with* the boy, instead of built-up frustration which would have to be tended to alone, once the boy left.

But a few materials I plagiarized from for stories... BOOKS: *Wifey, A Man and His Maid, The Story of O.* Comics: *Heavy Metal* ('80s – especially French artists), *Click!, Tart.* MOVIES: *101 Days of Sodom*, anything with biker's, that one w/ Margeux Hemingway getting raped, *Atomic Cafe, Flesh Gordon, Last Exit to Brooklyn, Bitter Moon, Tokyo Decadence.* TV: *James at 15, Sybil...*

The first time I saw *Sybil* I blocked out the holding the liquids part. You know, when Sybil's mom has her tied up on the kitchen table, I believe, and pours liquids into her vagina and demands that she hold her liquids. "Hold Your Liquids!" Okay, I don't have time to watch it again to confirm the exact quotes. Regardless it is so intense that Sally Field is forever a goddess for taking that on. Masturbatorily speaking, there are endless truly demented takes on this imagery.



Recall that Monty Python movie: was it *The Meaning of Life*? The scene where the teacher is teaching his students about sex and to do so he's brought his wife to class and in the front of class he is fucking her on a big bed while giving explanations as to how it is done. In my version I'm tied up,

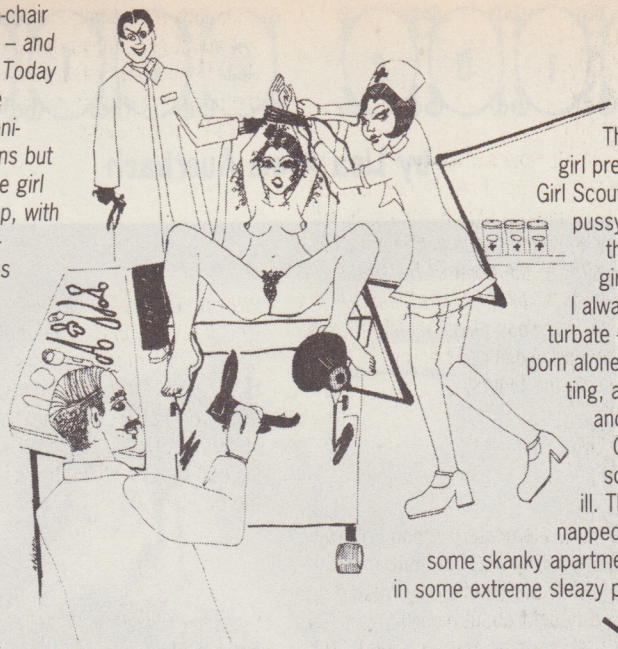


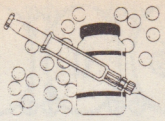
believe I know what it feels like. Who could be rimming me? How did they get in? I think I

on some sort of minimalist futuristic metal gyno-chair device. *Teacher is teaching the class – all boys – and I'm the subject. I represent the female species. Today they will examine the female species. Cut to the chase. He does a detailed explanation of my genitalia. Not only does he give scientific descriptions but he explains what the best way is to stimulate the girl to make her maximally lubricated. Boys come up, with gloved hands to feel for themselves – like a science lab. They have lube at their desk like it was an ink well. One boy spits on his glove instead and makes sure I – in my usual victim/drugged-up state – see this. He's wicked and cute. It leads on to the final scene, of each performing their first act of intercourse on me. I wonder how they are to be graded. Completely devastating.*

As with most fantasies, I would never ever want any of my masturbatory fantasies to come true.

I'm in my gyno's office. I'm in the waiting room. It was busy, I know 'cause they tell me they're backed up, yet there are only a few other people in there: all men. They give me something to drink while I wait. It's dosed of course. Finally they call my name, and I go in to change. The people there are different, and my doctor is a man instead of the horrifyingly ugly woman who normally sees me. I'm the last patient of the day and they lock the front door. I can't see them do it, but I know. I'm on the table waiting and I get drowsy. The doctor walks in, with the nurse, and another man who is an intern. He starts to talk to me. Everything has a double meaning. I'm lying down and the backside of the table is at a slant. The intern comes around to my left and holds me, while the doctor and the nurse take my arm and inject me with some drug that's like a combo of heroin, ecstasy, and a sleeping pill. I try to fight them off with little use. The nurse pulls my arms up, and straps them above my head. She then does a breast exam on me. The doctors are down below. The gyno is showing the intern his technique. He touches me and discusses me in technical terms. He feels inside me and has the intern doctor do the same. Inside my vagina, inside my ass. He inserts a speculum and the cold metal slowly opens me up completely. With a bright light they are able to look deep inside me. I'm about as naked as you can possibly get. In the meantime the nurse, who is wearing a very short white nurse dress with no underwear on, climbs up ontop of me with her pussy to my lips and wants me to suck her. I seal my mouth and turn my groggy head in despair. She lets the doctor know, who is instantly infuriated. He comes around the table and slaps my head and hits me until I give up. My tongue licks this woman. He yells for me to stick it deep inside her. He moves back to the other end of the table. Showing me how it should be done by doing it to me. He then sticks his penis inside me. Usually the intern is filming all this. The doctor pees in me and as he does the nurse pees in my mouth. I close it. I'm gagging. She stops peeing and slaps me and the doctor makes threats. He then thrusts himself into my ass, harder and harder, demanding I drink her piss. She starts peeing again and I open my mouth and swallow the liquid, most of it dripping all over me. She makes me stick my tongue in her ass, cueing the doctor to how I am doing. He's pleased. He comes in my ass and walks around the table, grabs me by the hair and forces me to clean him with my mouth. I'm about to throw up but don't dare disobey. I haven't a choice. The nurse is sucking the cum from my ass.... I usually can't make it farther then that.





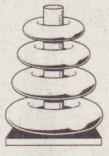
The first porn I ever saw was with an old girl pretending to be a young Girl Scout selling Girl Scout cookies. She had such a small tight pussy, with barely any pubic hair, and from the neck down she seemed like a little girl. I didn't really like watching porn cause I always wanted to run to a room to go masturbate – come to think of it I never watched porn alone, it was always in a party sort of setting, and you were suppose to be very casual and not bothered about the whole thing. Once a boy tried to do it with me while some porno was on and it made me feel ill. Though often I fantasize about being kidnapped (my fave is in a dark gross van or some skanky apartment in Hollywood) and used and abused in some extreme sleazy porn movie.

Pool tables, old men, motels, diapers, vibrating dildos, film cameras...

Masturbation isn't just used to tone down frustration, take the pressure off so one can focus, or for the sheer pleasure... it's a great tool for working your imagination. You must create environments, characters, dialogue for your stories. They must be exciting. They must be tight, and well-timed. You work on masturing your story through regular editing sessions.

I recently heard on Dr. Dean Adell radio program that they have sonograms which show a female fetus masturbating in the womb.

Oh, you want a moral to this mess-o-story? Well, what ever I print I burn. My secret masturbatory world released makes it much less cherished and obsessive. As a matter of fact, though I'm pretty certain I have masturbated just about every day of my life, when I started typing this up I stopped. There's no moral to this story except that I have much more energy now and I'm not exactly certain what to use it on instead.



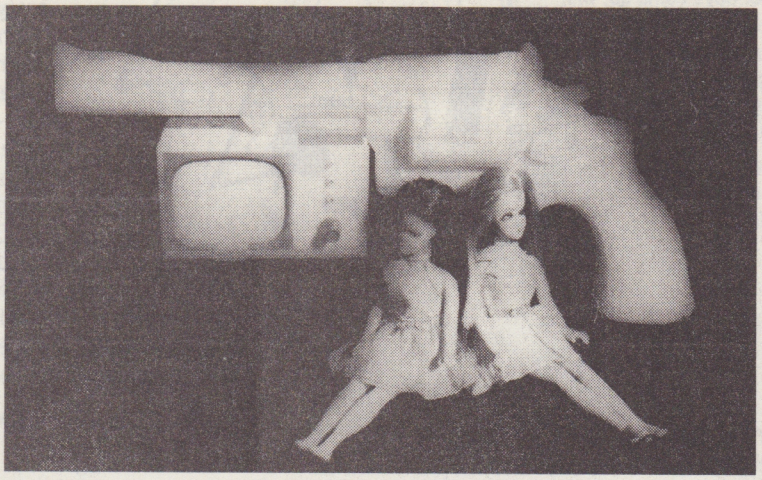
Darby is the editor of this here magazine. Besides that she is a girl who believes that if she keeps on treasuring memories of who she's been, she'll be stuck like that forever. Stay tuned for the upcoming all-female masturbation book, co-edited with Nina Blake, out sometime this century.

Large illustrations by Gloria Alvear, who likes to spend her time drawing, painting, hanging out with her cats, and masturbating.

locked the door. Are they cute? I feel like my bulthole is being leased and knotted. I want to

Suicide Solution

by Lisa Anne Auerbach



Shelley and Stef both learned to fire a gun by aiming it at their head and pulling the trigger. They did this together, holding hands, simultaneously, in the field behind Stef's father's house. Presumably they died at the same instant. Neither had to watch the other suffer. It was a plan one minute, a done deed the next. Two nervous hands sweated on black pistols. Two heads exploded like melons falling off of a truck on a freeway.

Shelley and Stef were freshmen at Western High. Now, after the fact, everyone will say only the nicest things about them. Whether or not they are true is immaterial. It is in bad taste to speak ill of the dead; they can no longer defend themselves, and anyway, it doesn't matter. The wailing Mrs. Frank, perpetually sobbing Mrs. Stewart, the haggard fathers, sisters, brothers, friends, and family acquaintances all believe that these girls were the sweetest, most excellent, talented, intelligent girls that had ever walked on earth, in any century.

Stef Frank and Shelley Stewart wore Revlon Colorstay Brilliant Red Mango lipstick. Before they decided that the forehead was the best place to point the gun, they had been planning on putting the barrel into their young mouths. They did not want to get lipstick on the matte black paint. They didn't want their fathers to be upset about having to remove lipstick from steel, no big deal really, but lipstick does stain. Colorstay, after it has sixty seconds to set, will not rub off on anything. It's new and it's from Revlon. They saw the ads on TV during their favorite teen-type shows. Kissing would not remove the color.

Some other stuff they watched did not have lipstick ads. They liked David Brinkley and Ted Koppel. Parents will now say it was because their daughters were interested in current events and hungry for news. While the girls were still alive, it was no secret that they watched these shows for the gore. Bosnia, Yugoslavia, the piles of bodies may be flashed briefly on the local news, but on these late night or early morning programs, coverage was extensive. The more serious news programs had the all the best and most scandalous photographs of the newly dead. Shelley and Stef would watch together, over the phone or side by side, collapsing in fits of grossed out giggles when the announcer would would say a word like "viscera" or "pungent."

Police brutality bored them. They never watched *Cops* and it's true that neither girl was much interested in marijuana. Stef's brother, Arthur, grew pot plants in his closet and was generous to his friends, his sister, his sister's friends, anyone who would come over to his room and bong out with him. Other drugs were available at the high school or downtown, but the girls weren't caught up in that scene. Acid scared them, cocaine made them nervous, PCP seemed gauche, heroin trendy, and Ecstasy out of fashion.

Stef was blonde, Shelley brunette. They both were small in stature, almost scrawny, but attractive. Shelley was fourteen, Stef was fourteen and a half. They had not been teenagers very long. Their bodies were still getting used to the idea. Both had gotten their periods the previous summer while away at camp together. They looked down at their splotchy panties in adjoining bathroom stalls and started squealing. It was a miracle. They were the last ones to get it out of everyone they knew. They were beginning to suspect that they were boys. Olga got hers almost five years ago, but she was from another country. After that, almost a friend per week made the proud and embarrassing announcement. Shelley and Stef thought that some girls were lying. They wanted to see evidence.

"I want to die a virgin," Shelley said to Stef one day. They were in Arthur's room. Shelley showed Stef the "Houses of the Holy" CD cover art and said, "Isn't she beautiful? That's what I'm gonna do in heaven, climb rocks."

"There are no rocks in heaven."

"Sure there are. There is a warm beach, and sand, and rocks; lots of big smooth rocks."

"Heaven has soft fields of grain that stretch forever," said Stef.

"What's there to do all day in heaven?"

"I dunno, same thing we do here, I guess."

"Sit around?"

"Yeah."

"Do they have TV in heaven?"

"Probably."

"Do you really think there is such a place?" asked Shelley.

This was a nagging question and, really, there was only one way to find out the answer. Not to say that this was the primary reason for their well-aimed shots. There wasn't really a primary reason, just a host of secondary excuses, boredom, acne, failed math tests, growing out of favorite shoes too quickly, forgetting to tape TV shows, out of milk one morning, pee on the toilet seat at school, bugs, the heat, the cold, rain, too much sunshine. The life of a teenage girl is not to be envied or glorified.

Stef brought up the idea over lunch and Shelley nearly choked on her Pringles. "You mean suicide?" She spit out the words with the slightly-chewed potato product. "Isn't it illegal?"

"Really? How can it be?"

"I dunno. I just think it is. Like, if you jump off of a huge bridge and don't die, I think you can go to jail for life. It's attempted murder of yourself. Plus, think of all those people driving around underneath. You could land on a windshield and give someone nightmares that will never go away."

"That's really stupid," said Stef, "Like, I'm sure we're responsible enough to look out below

open my eyes and lay on my back, but I'm suddenly paralyzed. I can't move, really.

and make sure that no one is in our way. Anyway, who wants to jump off of a bridge? You could end up just maimed and then you'd be wheelchair bound and probably drool. I think a gun's better."

"A gun?"

"Yeah, just put it your mouth and pull the trigger. It's virtually foolproof. You just have to get a big enough gun."

Shelley and Stef had never personally held or fired a handgun, but they had seen it done a lot on TV. They rented James Bond movies at the video store, movies that featured a lot of beautiful women in revealing outfits with powerful weapons. Cleavage in danger fascinated them. If they didn't die by their own manicured hands, they wanted to become international spies. They bought wigs and sunglasses. They shoplifted shoes and purses. They took taxicabs and went to restaurants. Sometimes they brought along toy guns and tucked them into the tops of their thigh-high hose. Often they skipped class. Their parents never found out, even after they were dead and buried. The principal didn't have the heart to tell them.

The girls spent the night together often, at one home or another. Stef's parents were cooler, and didn't care what time the girls finally got to sleep, or if they even slept at all. Sometimes Mr. Frank would set up a tent for them in the backyard and they would bring flashlights and magazines and gab until the sun came up. They never ran out of things to talk about. There was always more to say.

"Dear Danielle," Shelley read aloud, "by the time you get this letter we will be superstars and superdead. We will have already (hopefully) undergone rigor mortis and we will be stiff as boards. Perhaps we will have bugs also, and lack heads." The girls both laugh. Their sleeping bags are set up so that they face one another, their pillows touch. It is a fairly large tent, not really for backpacking, more for family car camping, perfect for the backyard. "Please get Arthur to give you back the sweater I borrowed last week, and thanks for letting me wear it. I would enclose it in this note, but it won't fit in the envelope. We'll come visit you as ghosts! Love, S & S."

"Too morose, the end about the ghosts," said Stef. "Why can't you just write 'Keep in touch' or 'see ya' or 'later' or just 'have a nice life'?"

"I just thought it might be funny, and anyways, what if we could? What if we could come back as ghosts and visit all our friends? That would be so cool."

"Well, if you want to visit with your friends, maybe you should think again about shooting yourself in the head," said Stef. "There is no guarantee of afterlife."

They brought a picnic lunch, a radio, several chocolate bars, a camera, a stuffed bear, extra Colorstay, matching 9 millimeter handguns, photos of their families, and plenty of cash. Shelley and Stef walked far into the field, wearing their very favorite clothes, and shoes which made it difficult to hurry. These were this year's school clothes their Moms had purchased after being nagged by girls who refused to settle for anything less. The outfits were real bonafide 'designer', no cheap knock-offs. Regrettably, they would soon be unwearable. Blood is difficult to remove from man-made fibers.

Shelley and Stef sat down on an old bedspread and unwrapped the lunch. Neither felt much like eating. The sandwiches were piled with freshly roasted turkey, extra sharp cheddar cheese, ripe avocado, sprouts, spicy mustard, and baby greens. It was a shame to leave them to rot. Taking large bites, the girls forced themselves to chew and swallow. Past the lumps in their throats, into the butterfly-infested stomachs went the nutrition. It was followed by gassy water and then chocolate. The girls gorged. They tried to relax, talked about nothing, felt warmed by the sun, reapplied cosmetics, then felt ready to die. Second thoughts? Perhaps, but they had already written to their friends, the notes were all en route, at the post office, or delivered into a locker, under a door, e-mail, to be received later. They didn't want to disappoint these people. Also they didn't want this 'cry for help' getting them committed. They had read stories of teen suicide failures having to spend a life in a padded cell, taking slow walks in a garden, popping prescription pills legally, shock treatment, no visitors, hospital gowns, bad TV reception, card games all the time, patronizing nurses, lecherous doctors, censored magazines, gummy overcooked food, paper slippers, incurable depression....

✦ ✦ ✦

Lisa AA has a job at the Griffith Observatory and edits The Casual Observer: An Armchair Guide to the Darkroom Log. *She also knits, writes for various legit publications, and co-edits (with Benjamin Weissman) a snow culture zine* Snowflake *out now from Smart Art Press, Santa Monica.*

Photographs by Lorraine Mahru (who is Ben Is Dead's only Barbie Girl).

THE KILLZINE SMALL PRESS COALITION OF AMERICA

The first issue of the Killzine Zine is out now. This issue features the killzine tour diaries - all controversies included, the state of zine distribution, and more. $2 p.p.d. to the below address.

www.killzine.com
Check out our new all-zine, all the time web site. With tips, how-to's and F.A.Q.'s.

Killzine
c/o Ben Is Dead
P.O. Box 3166
Hollywood, CA 90028

HOLLYWOOD BOOK & POSTER CO.

HOURS
Mon. – Thu. 11-6
Fri. – Sat. 11-7,
Sun. – 12-5

TV & FILM
ROCK & ROLL
WRESTLING & COLLECTABLES

Posters • Photos • Press Kits
Lobby Cards • Scripts
And Much More

Buy • Sell • Trade
Bring Want Lists

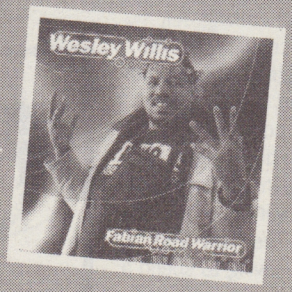
6349 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90028
213/465.8764

O.K. this is not funny anymore. I can't even open my eyes and at this point I'm not asleep. I'm wide awake, so I know I'm not

wesley willis

Fabian Road Warrior

His American Recordings debut.
Featuring the hit single
"Alanis Morissette"



Feel The Power

His new album.

"I'm going to rock the jam session just like Mudbone. I'm gonna do it well like engine, engine number nine, like the train going down the line." — Wesley Willis, former Chicago street artist, diagnosed schizophrenic, and indie rock toast of the town.

For the latest info about Wesley Willis and all other American Recordings artists, contact American Recordings on the Internet at http://american.recordings.com or e-mail us at american@american.recordings.com or on America Online - Keyword: Warner

american

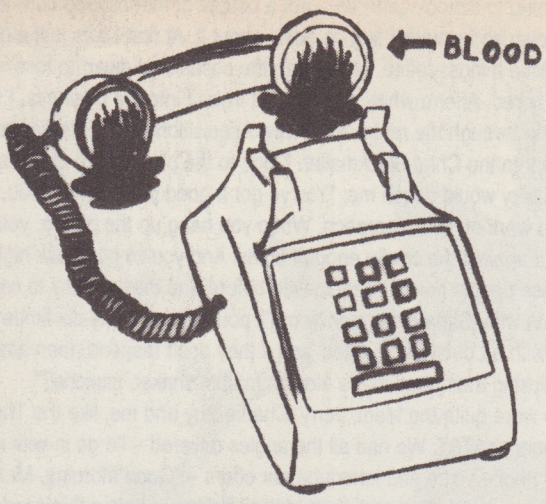
©1996 American Recordings

FAILURE

FANTASTIC PLANET

They returned from space only to discover a world of hostile strangers!

www.wbr.com/failure
© 1996 Slash Records



Goodphoners

BY WILLIAM HAM

People still ask me why I did it. Why a level-headed kid like me would get mixed up in The Life after seeing so many of my friends go down. Was it the prestige? The money? The gourmet pork rinds in the breakroom vending machine? I always just shake my head, shrug, and shatter their shins with a crowbar. There's just no way to answer them. If you haven't been there, feeling that roaring sense of invincibility, knowing that you had a family behind you that would always be there for you, whether you needed protection, money, or a decent dental plan, you will never know. Looking back on it now, I can honestly say it was the best forty hours a week with a base pay of eight dollars an hour of my life. That was before it all came crashing down like a discarded headset.

It all started in the neighborhood. Little Passaic was the toughest part of town, crawling with middle-class vermin: mail fraudsters, tennis racketeers, strung-out analgesic heads. A kid like me, head full of dreams gleaned from infomercials and hair-replacement ads, always looked up to the royalty that walked our streets, the guys that always seemed to have money, polo shirts and coupons for three dollars off an entrée at all participating Red Lobsters. They commanded respect everywhere they went. They were always served first at the convenience store. They always got their dry cleaning back whether they had their ticket or not. They stuck out like a sore dialing finger. Feared, hated, but always respected – they were telemarketers. The toughest Ma Bell-fuckers on the North by East Side. You fucked with them, cheated them, or worse, star-69'd them, you could be sure they'd go cellular on your ass. Mom always warned me to keep away – "you could get either killed or tinnitus," she'd say – but I couldn't. No way. From the moment I saw them in their JC Penney Armani-knockoff suits and their iron sulfide pinky rings, I knew I had to be a part of their world. I knew I had found – pardon the expression – my calling.

I was twelve when it happened. I had spent every afternoon after school by the corner, running around, trying to get their attention, and generally acting like a puppy. (Sometimes I'd bring my puppy with me and he'd act like a twelve-year-old boy – we had an understanding.) But no, they were cool. I finally got up the nerve to ask one of them what it took to join, and he just looked at me and said in that tough but well-modulated voice they all had, "You'll wanna talk to my manager about that. Please hold while I transfer you." Then he picked me up by the ears and threw me in the dumpster while his buddy hummed the Muzak version of "That's Amore." They were subtle about it, but the message came across.

I'd almost given up hope when, about three months later, Fate intervened. (This was before Fate lost over 50% of his ability to intervene in that sixteen-car-phone pile-up on 92nd Street last June. I still believe that was an inside job.) "Hey, Kid," he called to me. I had no idea how he knew my name (my folks weren't what you'd call imaginative), but I was flattered by the attention. "You think you could do me a favor? I want you to hold something for me." Then he handed me a bloody .357 Magnum and a bootlegged copy of next year's Yellow Pages. Yeah, I knew it was wrong, and looking back, maybe I should've turned around right there and ran. Maybe I would have if Fate hadn't been standing on my feet. But I wasn't going anywhere anyway. I'd never held one of those things in my hand before and it excited me.

"Wow," I said, "it's heavier than I thought it would be! And the pages are such a cool shade of yellow!"

"Shhhh," he whispered, leaning in. "It's called cadmium, Kid. And there's more where that came from if you just shut up and hold on to it. If anybody asks, tell 'em it fell off the back of a truck. You might wanna pick the gun up before it gets wet, too." Then he walked away.

Naturally, the heat came along a few minutes later. Officer Friendly and his partner, Officer Standoffish, came sauntering up. They knew how to intimidate, that's for sure, especially in those platform heels that were police issue for that brief period in the mid-eighties because of that computer error. Friendly had a personal vendetta against the local telemobsters ever since his little brother got rabies from a counterfeit Mickey Mouse phone. He wasn't about to let even a little kid like me get away with anything. "You didn't happen to see a sawed-off little jamoke come through here with a copy of the 1985 Urban City phone book, did ya?"

"N-no! Uh-uh! It fell off the back of a truck driver! I swear!"

"That's funny," his partner said, "looks like you've got a growth inside your shirt of approximately the same size, shape and thickness of the aforementioned telephone directory."

"Um... I've been working out."

"Well," Friendly said with a sick smile, "maybe you'd like to discuss your exercise regimen downtown, huh, Kid?"

"But we are downtown."

He grabbed me. "It's a colloquial figure of speech meaning the precinct house, you little..."

"Wait a minute," Standoffish said. "I thought I was supposed to be Bad Cop today!"

"No, I'm Bad Cop. It's Wednesday, remember? We eat Chinese on Wednesday, you pay, I get to be Bad Cop."

imagining anything. I can't open my mouth. Everything is frozen. What started off as light licking

"That's not fair! Monday was a holiday and I had a cold yesterday. I busted some skulls, sure, but I wasn't focused."

"Well, that's your problem, isn't it? That's how it works. We tried doing it on a case-by-case basis before, but by the time we got through three out of five on 'Rock – Paper – Scissors,' the Impetigo Killer got away, remember?"

They went on like that for a while. I bet they didn't even notice I was gone until they got through their second round of "Eeenie Meenie Miney Mo."

Once word got back to Fate that I came through without squealing, that was it. I was in. Two days later, he brought me to their secret hideout/phone bank, cleverly disguised as a second-hand smoke shop. When I was escorted through the door for the first time, it was like I had walked into another world I had only seen in movies and in long-winded first-person reminiscences in quarterly magazines devoted to popular culture. The gang was all there – Tony "the Icepick" Volpone, Vinnie "the Circular Saw" Scungilli, Marty "the Assistant Shift Supervisor" Borzetti – gambling, cleaning their guns, filling out time cards. Fate took me by the hand. "Come on, Kid, there's someone I want you to meet." He brought me into a back room, and there, sitting behind the biggest desk I had ever seen, was the Godphoner himself, the caller di tutti callers, Don Toblerone. Fate knelt and kissed his hand, then wiped the slobber off with a Wet-Nap. "This is the kid I told you about," he said, gesturing to me.

Don Toblerone said nothing, just sat there sizing me up. "Medium, right?" he finally asked. I nodded. "Fate, go and get this young man a new shirt. I'd like a minute alone with him." Fate left and Toblerone smiled. "I've heard a lot about you, son," he said. "You remind me of myself at your age – ambitious, full of hopes and dreams, both thumbs intact. I came from the old country – I'm not sure which one – back in '27. My family didn't make it, they were all killed in the Great Credit Rating Purge of 1926. Since I came to this country, this has become my family. I want you to think of us as your family as well. You want anything – money, clothes, lessons on speaking in a convincing Italian dialect – you come to me. But since we are family, I may ask something of you someday. Now, that day may never come, though I do advise you to keep the 23rd open in case I call on you." He smiled and raised his eyebrows with the help of his personal assistant. "You get it? 'Call' on you? We're telemarketers?... Okay, do me a favor now. Go down to the drugstore and get me some gauze pads for my cheeks. The cotton that's in there now is muffling my avuncular wit." He coughed. "And some lozenges. This Brando imitation's murder on my throat." I walked out of that room with my head reeling, his last words hanging in my brain like a glorious dial tone: "And get a receipt."

From that day on, I was a permanent fixture at the hideout. I got myself in tight with Jerry Corduroy, one of Toblerone's main callers. After they pried us loose, we became friends. He was a bit older, knew all the tricks, and he introduced me to the boys: there was Tony Ballsatti – Brenda, everybody called him – a good guy. He'd give you the shirt off his back and almost enough quarters to get it washed. There was Polonius Kowalski, the toughest old bastard on the block (at least he was until his parents got married eighteen months later) – he took no shit from nobody, though he'd borrow some if he got desperate. And then there was Charlie Boy. He was a piece of work a la mode. Some of the boys said he was a hothead, a little crazy. "Don't get mixed up with him," they'd say, "his favorite Woody Allen film is *Stardust Memories*." I told them I'd take my chances. Jerry was very protective of Charlie Boy. "Charlie's father told me on his deathbed to take good care of him," he told me later. "That was the last thing he said. Then he just slipped away. Well, all right, I smothered him with a pillow. Either way, I'm keeping my word."

I hung around the hideout every day after school. After a while, I didn't bother going to school. Later on, I got a couple of the fellas to burn the school down so I wouldn't feel so guilty about it. At first I was just a gofer, fetching little things: coffee, notepaper, the occasional dwarf to toss when they got bored. After a while, I insinuated myself into the business. I worked my way up through the ranks, from New Acquisitions and Extortion to Consultant to the Chief Blackmailer. I took to the phones like clam sauce to linguini. Jerry would coach me: "You've got a good phone voice, Kid, but you gotta work on your approach. When you hang up the phone, you're not bashing it against the cradle enough times. And you've gotta ask high – a lot of these people haven't been called before and they're easy to convince. Go right in with 'Gimme the money or I'll pound you twenty-six times in the kidneys with a Louisville Slugger,' and if they don't respond, then amend it to just sticking their head in the electric martini shaker, capiche?"

We were quite the team, Jerry, Charlie Boy and me, like the Three Musketeers or AT&T. We had all the angles covered – I'd go in with my pleasant phone voice and introduce our offers – "Good morning, Mr./Ms. _____, this is Kid calling on behalf of the Legitimate Italian Businessman's Association as a paid fundraiser. I'm sure you value the use of your legs, Mr./Ms. ____, so I'll keep this brief." If, on the first try, they wouldn't take us up on our suggested pledge levels or had any questions, I'd throw it over to Jerry. "I understand your concerns, Mr./Ms. ____, that is a lot of money. But just think how far that generous pledge of yours will go to ensuring that nobody accidentally replaces your windshield wiper fluid with sulfuric acid. What's that, sir/ma'am? Is it tax-deductible? Who pays taxes?" And if that didn't work, Charlie Boy'd get on the line for the final thrust. "Fuck me, Mr./Ms. ____? No, fuck you! Yeah, I think you fuckin' heard me! I'll stamp you like the self-addressed envelope your fuckin' pledge confirmation card's gonna fuckin' come in! Let me double-check your mailing address so I can come over there and burn your fuckin' house to the ground, ya fuckin' mook! Yeah, fuckin' MasterCard will be just fine." We were unstoppable.

Those were the good days. Nobody bothered to ask where all the money and the free gift certificates good for $50 off getting somebody whacked (courtesy of Marsala's House of Brutality and Pizza) were coming from. We had it all – women, cash, a good 401K plan. But nothing lasts forever, not even a stuttering guy trying to dictate his change of address to you. After a while, things started to go wrong. Terribly wrong.

Jerry started getting frustrated that he couldn't get a bigger piece of the action, so he started mixing with a bad crowd. Phone pimps. He had a whole stable of girls and guys with sultry voices doing his bidding. It was an effective scam – he'd lure the tele-johns in, the girls would get them going, and just before they got off, he'd burst in and start brutalizing them. "I'm slapping you around," he'd say. "Okay, now I'm kicking you. Gimme your credit card numbers or I'll simulate killing you, I swear I will."

Toblerone knew nothing of this – he was serving six months upstate for asking an undercover FCC agent if he had Prince Albert in a can – but even if he had, I don't think he could have prevented the downward spiral that had already started, a spiral that resembled a really long phone cord. I noticed something was amiss when Charlie burst into the hideout one afternoon, baseball bat in one hand, a stack of invoices in the other. "Jerry, Kid, Fate – make this your last fuckin' call. We're going upstate."

"What's goin' on, Charlie? Gang war? Somebody rat us out?"

"Worse. Some ratfuck didn't get his pledge back to us within 7 – 10 days of receiving his fuckin' pledge card. We're gonna do an 800 number on his ass."

I was aghast. In truth, I was practically two ghasts. Usually, we left the dirty work to our operatives who were standing by to take our orders at all times. I had never been asked to help beat dead a deadbeat before. Something told me this was personal.

"This is personal," Charlie said. Oh, yeah, that's who it was. When we got to Townville, I realized whose line Charlie wanted to cut. We were after

has now turned sloshy and greedy. The tongue that is burrowing up inside me doesn't feel like

a member of the rival Gulpino family, the marketeers that held the South by West side in their grasp and beat us eight times out of ten for the yearly Al Cap(h)one award. Out of respect, Toblerone had a strict hands-off policy towards Gulpino ("leave him alone or I'll cut your hands off," to quote the memo), but he wasn't around to keep Charlie in check. He could put up with a lot – having the shipment of his favorite brand of coffee stirrer rerouted to Jersey, for example, or the time somebody dumped the horse's head in his cubicle so it obscured his view of the confirmation screen – but nobody fucked with his 5% commission and lived.

We sped up to Townville and burst into Club Babyseal just before last call. "There he is," Charlie said. Indeed, leaning against the bar was one of Gulpino's henchmen, Henchmann. Suddenly, I was deeply frightened. This guy was a made man. He had his own nametag and everything.

"Oh, look!" he said in between downing Lavoris shots. "It's little Charlie! Still using them archaic rotary phones, kiddo?"

"Hang the fuck up, asshole. I got some static to clear up wit' you. Tell 'im, Jerry."

"Donations to the Break-A-Wrist Foundation, $50.00; Planned Parents of Hoods, $100.00; and thirteen separate pledges to the American Council for the Acid-Blinded of $75.00 each." He threw the invoices on the bar dramatically. "All outstanding."

"Whatsamatta? My credit ain't good enough for you? Listen, boy, why don't you go phone yourself?"

That did it. The last thing you wanna do is present Charlie with a metaphysical impossibility. Pisses him off. He jumped at Henchmann, knocked him to the ground, and beat him to death with his own cell phone, then shot Fate in the chest for good measure.

Jerry was livid. "What the fuck did you do that for?"

"I hadda shut that dumb fuck up. He kept popping his 'p's. That drives me fuckin' nuts."

"Not him, jerkoff. Why'd you off Fate?"

"His character was underdeveloped. It was a mercy killing." Nobody could argue with that logic, so we left, leaving an extra-large tip for the bartender to keep him quiet, then shooting him in the back of the head to be on the safe side.

Things only got worse after that. Wisereps started dropping left and right. Ballsati got his pant leg stuck on some gum left under his cubicle and starved to death waiting for the EMTs to show up. Kowalski died of acute aesthetic trauma from the Muzak playing when he was put on hold one day. These may not seem suspicious to you, but, really, "Muskrat Love?" That kind of sadism had Gulpino written all over it. I guess you can't blame the rest of us for going a little crazy. Jerry got paranoid after one of his telebitches was discovered not using ear protection and forced all of his clients to wear Saran Wrap over their tongues for safety. Charlie Boy completely flipped and pared his sales pitch down to "GIMME YOUR FUCKIN' MONEY, SCUMBAG!" (which ended up working so well, we incorporated it into the regular script).

As for me, well, I was strung out. Black-market Tic-Tacs. I was making a fair bit of coin dealing them to the mint-junkies down on Halitosis Row, but I made the fatal mistake of sampling my own product. I didn't dare tell Toblerone, but I couldn't get anything past Jerry. "Get off that shit, man," he'd snarl, "they're turning your brains to mush and staining your fucking tongue wintergreen." I kept swearing I'd stop, but it was no use. My work was suffering, my breath kept shorting out the computer, and all I could think about was my next one-and-a-half-calorie fix. I was gonna fuck things up for good if I didn't stop. So finally, I resolved to give it up entirely after one last score.

I was supposed to hook up with a cache of mints, SweeTarts and Life Savers without holes in them (which are still illegal in forty-five states) and pass them on to a confectionary connection in New York. It was simple – get the whole bundle to the airport (artfully stashed in a crate labeled "NO ILLEGAL MINTS INSIDE"), meet my connection, and exchange it all for a cool, refreshing million. I'd be set for life, or at least be able to make the down payment on that small country I was considering becoming dictator of. It would've been perfect if I hadn't made the error that too many small-time sweetmeat peddlers make. As I left the house with my stash in hand, I tried making my way through the crowd by crying, "Outta my way! I got a boxload of unlawful breath fresheners over here!" Wouldn't you know, one of the old ladies in the crowd was actually an undercover SEA (Snack Enforcement Agency) agent and I was arrested on the spot. I was brought downtown and booked on three counts of breath mint possession with intent to distribute, one count of resisting arrest, and one count of being a fucking idiot. I was gonna be sent up the river for a long, long time, and after that, I'd probably go to jail. I was screwed. Even that didn't cheer me up, though I must admit that that guard was surprisingly gentle. Then the assistant D.A. made me an offer I couldn't refuse. (You like that line? I just made it up.)

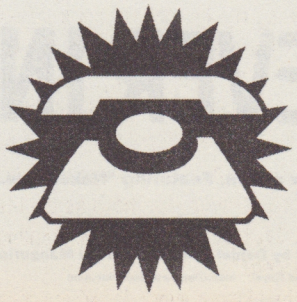
"We've been staking your operation out for a long time, Kid. We can drop the net on the whole North by East Side phone scam, we just need you to turn state's evidence for us. You can let your fingers do the walking, or you can do the fingering and walk. Help us disconnect Toblerone."

"Rat on my friends? Fuck, no! No chance! I'd rather... okay, I'll do it."

And that was that. I was the state's star witness; I had my own dressing room and everything. As a result of my testimony, Jerry, Charlie Boy, and Don Toblerone were all sentenced to sixteen consecutive life sentences, though I later heard that Toblerone's lawyer was able to get his sentence cut in half. The FBI set me up in the Witness Protection Program, giving me a new identity, a new pin number, everything. From the news, I've heard about what happened to the others. Charlie Boy got whacked in prison for killing one of Gulpino's men; last I heard, his condition remains stable. Jerry has been chosen as the new commercial spokesfella for NCI, offering 10% off your regular long-distance service or else he'll strangle you with piano wire. Don Toblerone is rumored to have gone legit with a new business manufacturing and selling his patented self-adhesive cheek gauze in drugstores and cotton wool factory outlets all over the country. And here I am, living like an ordinary schlub in a town without pity or call waiting, where a "conference call" means you have several people shouting into the receiver at the same time. I had it all. Now it's gone. Now I'm alone with my thoughts, my memories, and this short, asthmatic guy who says he's a director (who is here as part of his plea bargain over a charge of reckless camera movement), who keeps babbling about how my story would make a great film. "It's got everything! Loyalty, murder, wrong numbers, answering machines – it'd be perfect! Whattaya think?"
I told him I'd give him a call.

✦ ✦ ✦

William Ham (not his real assumed name) is Entertainment Editor for Lollipop Magazine *in Boston, Mass. His favorite color is vanilla.*



any tongue short of Gene Simmons that I've ever encountered. This tongue-ing is like being licked

Luscious Jackson

FEVER IN FEVER OUT

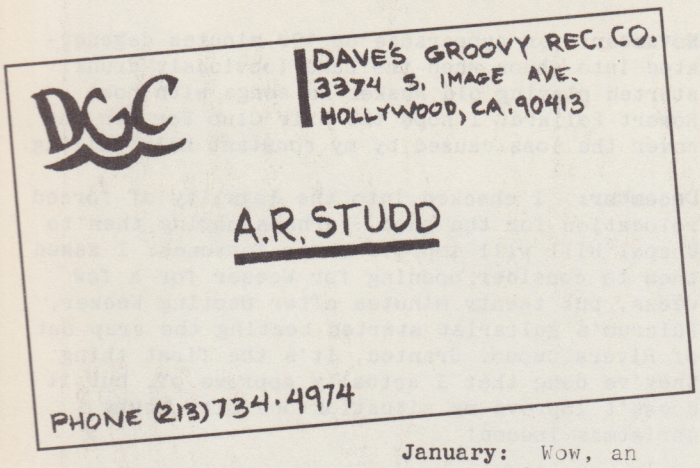
The new album. Featuring "Naked Eye."

Produced by Daniel Lanois with Tony Mangurian & Luscious Jackson

© 1996 Grand Royal http://hollywoodandvine.com

DIARY OF AN A&R MAN:

by Ryan Stacey Bigge



January: Wow, an amazing day today. I was promoted to A&R man. I must admit I'm a bit nervous, but I'm sure I'm up to the challenge. I'll make David Geffen proud.

February: An exciting day today. I discovered a new band with enormous potential. They have a female bass player, an enigmatic drummer, a shoegazing guitar player and a handsome lead singer. I couldn't ask for better. This group should appeal to raging hormones of both teenaged boys and girls. Oh, I almost forgot, their lyrics and music also show great potential. If I play my cards right I may never again have to set foot in a smoke-filled death trap and endure Grateful Dead cover bands and hard-core polka punk rockers. Yes, I can feel it in my bones, we're going to sell a million plus this year alone!

March: Contract negotiations went adequately. I almost failed to stifle a guffaw when the term 'artistic integrity' cropped up. Will these people EVER learn? The only real stumbling block occurred over their name. They're called "The Band Formerly Known as Fulcrum" and are quite fond it, for reasons I have yet to fathom. I tried convincing them to alter their name to some cool one word title like "Rawk" or "Qwerty." To this they countered with "Toque" (Although think of the merchandising irony. That's pretty alternative.) We managed to settle on Fulcrum.

April 12th: To my dismay, the band hired Steve Albini to produce their first album. It took an entire bottle of pepto-bismal to placate my ulcer. We still have some options though... 1) Have Steve killed. 2) Have Steve "roughed up real good." 3) Get Steve painfully drunk so he'll sign a contract with us and thereby allow us to blackmail him.

April 21st: The album is a mess. I listened to an early version of it and declared, "Your future isn't wide open, because this A&R man doesn't hear a single." They shrugged non-committally. Stupid slackers. I'm bringing in Butch Vig to try and salvage this mess. Maybe he can re-mix some order into the chaos. I can't understand what happened. They didn't sound so "experimental" live. D'oh.

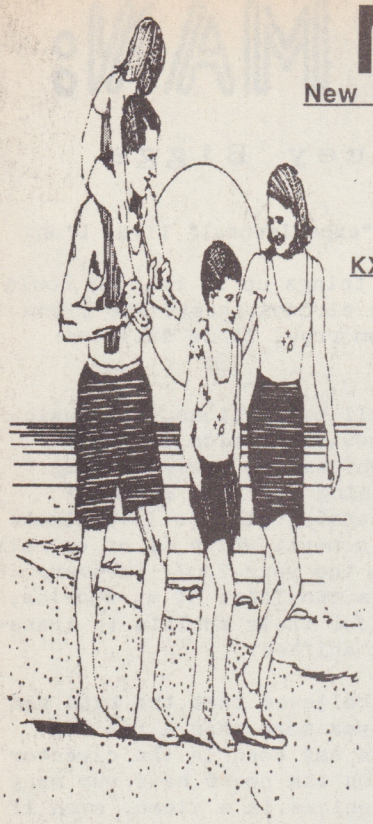
May 30th: I patched things up as best as could be expected under the circumstances. The album is set to be released tomorrow. It is entitled "Atlas Shrugged".

June 14th: Against all predictions, the music press has given the new album wide critical acclaim. One thing confuses me however. Many reviewers keep mentioning Ayn Rand in their reviews. Who is Ayn Rand? I plan to investigate this in my next free moment, which by my calculations should occur in the year 2002. However, this Rand character is the least of my worries, as I'm still waiting for their acclaim to translate into units being shifted.

July: I erroneously believed that the band had hired Spike Jonze. I was more than a bit concerned when Mike Jones sat down in the director's chair this morning. You can never have too many explosions and naked chicks in a video, even if the year is 1995. Sex and violence sells, and I'm not above using gross exploitation to ensure this band succeeds. It's for their own good. Unfortunately they wanted to have a black screen with the words "This is Not a Fulcrum Video" across the middle. We managed to reach a compromise of sorts, but the end result still turned out to be some minimalist art piece against music videos. On a completely unrelated topic, I became impotent today. Coincidence? I don't think so.

August: Sure, *Spin* loves them and they're *Sassy*'s Cute Band of the Month, but sales are still lagging behind. I'm currently trying to convince one of the members to commit suicide. I always thought they worked better as a trio. While I haven't brought them around to my way of thinking yet, there's still time. Perhaps I can ask one of the band members to come out of the closet (even though they're all heterosexual.) Every little bit helps. Mental Note to myself: In future, ensure the small print reads, "If a band fails to meet projected sales figures within five months, either the lead singer will commit suicide or the drummer will agree to choke on his or her own vomit, thereby garnering enough attention to create 'buzz'."

out by a lecherous anteater. Also the lining of my chute is beginning to burn like something acidic



No Life

New Releases in early '97

Beatnik Filmstars
Phase 3 LP/CD
Bunnygrunt
CD/LP
KXLU Demolisten Comp.
CD ONLY
Longstocking
CD EP/10"
Rock Band #47
CD EP/10"
'57 Lesbian 7"

Also Available:
Bunnygrunt
Action Pants CD/LP
Standing Hampton 7"
Nerdy Girl
Twist Her CD/LP
Dime Store Hussy 7"
S/T 10"
Pest 5000
Toast 7"
Rock Band #47
New Boyfriend 7"
Super 5 Thor
Tubeless Ignition 7" EP

Mail Order Prices: 7"s=$3•CD=$10•LP=$7•10" and CD EP-$6

POB 461778•LA, CA 90046213-845-1200
shop on-line @ www.nolife.com

October: In an attempt to re-float the titanic that is my career, I convinced the band to submit a song for the movie *Ms. Pacman II: Revenge of the Red Jhost*. They submitted a cover of Neil Young's "Piece of Crap" which the studio chose not to use. Bastards!

November: An appearance on 120 minutes degenerated into chaos when the band (obviously drunk) started playing old Husker Du songs with host Robert Pollard. I hope the Hair Club For Men can cover the loss caused by my constant hair pulling.

December: I checked into the legality of forced relocation for the band. Perhaps moving them to Chapel Hill will improve their fortunes. I asked them to consider opening for Weezer for a few weeks, but twenty minutes after meeting Weezer, Fulcrum's guitarist started beating the crap out of Rivers Cuomo. Granted, it's the first thing they've done that I actually approve of, but it doesn't improve my situation one bit. Merry Christmas indeed!

January: I got those stupid donkeys their own Web page today. As predicted by yours truly, they hired their hacker friends to alter the page to read, "Get some fresh air and meet some people, you pasty-faced, socially inept, geek boys." I'm calling the Suicide Prevention Hotline so often that they recognize my voice. Luckily, they haven't put me on hold yet, as the old joke goes.

February: I took the band at concealed gunpoint to the annual DGC clinic entitled: How to be even more alternative. They spent most of conference singing "I won't get on my knees for you, I won't be a record business whore" over and over and over again. Next year, we try Ludovico's Technique.

March: My girlfriend of three years left me after she could no longer tolerate my tortured screams during the night. To have her tell it, every night for the past three weeks I have been shouting, "Put the video in the buzz bin for Christ's sake! They've paid their dues! Just put it in the buzz bin, it's no skin off your back. Youth culture fascists!" It's just as well. If the nightmares didn't finish her off, my burgeoning neurosis and obsessive-compulsive disease would.

April: I rented "How to Get Ahead in Advertising." I can certainly sympathize with the guy. I'm nearing the end of my rope. If I don't think of a way out of this mess soon, I'll be joining "that stupid club".

May: The solution to my woes finally appeared to me in an insomnia induced vision: I'm going to form my own band. My last act before quitting will be signing myself to a four album deal. It's time to exact my revenge. Nyahahahahahaha.

✦ ✦ ✦

Ryan Bigge is the author of *Single Guy Zine*, guitarist for the obscure Vancouver band The Plantains, an associate editor at *Adbusters* magazine, a part time lifeguard, and an all round nice guy. He had a great time at the Killtour Tour in Seattle. Adoring fan-mail is gladly received at: rbigge@sfu.ca

Illustrations by Evan Mack. Evan performs brain surgery by day, & does Big Jesus by night.

is fermenting inside me. The pleasure I was experiencing earlier has turned painful and

My Disease Narrative

BY BRIAN DOHERTY

digital collage by Howard Hallis

Not all stories require active protagonists. Some of the greatest drama is internal. As is some of the greatest stasis, as I discovered around 10 years ago. I was 18 years old when I contracted Guillan-Barre Syndrome, a delightfully soap opera-esque disease of unknown cause that eats away the myelin sheath coating your nervous system. That sheath transmits signals from your brain to your body – without it, one is close to completely paralyzed. The illness struck a week before Christmas 1986, during the last week of my first semester as a college student at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

Stories of disease appeal to two major emotions in the reader: Schadenfreude ("God, am I glad that wasn't me") and hypochondria ("God, will that someday be me?") This story supplies much fodder for schadenfreude; I'll start with some small appeal to hypochondria.

The early symptoms of Guillan-Barre, for me, was a curious tingling in the mouth and tongue while eating, similar to the slow return of sensation after dental medication like Novocaine. I was eating a hamburger at Burger King when I first noticed it – something I don't do any more. It was probably a double cheese something or other. And fries. Of course a coke.

The sensation returned later that evening, while drinking water from the dorm hall fountain, and eating a bowl of Lucky Charms. The next day was spent in uncharacteristic physical labor, helping my friend Laurie move her possessions across town and up four flights of stairs. Much heavy lifting in that disturbing December Florida weather, just warm enough for exertion to bring sweat, just chilly enough that the sweat instantly turns cold and clammy on the skin. Dizziness and vertigo overcame me by the end of the day of hoisting and dragging hutches and boxes. I spent the waning of the evening lying in my top bunk and desultorily chewing on some pizza my roommate had ordered.

After a brief and fitful nap, I scaled down the bunk and traipsed down the hall to the bathroom, mind and body swaying all the way. I didn't make it. I was sprawled on the threadbare dorm hall carpet when my friend Mike discovered me. "Would you like to go to the hospital?" he sensibly asked. I nodded numbly.

Someone whose name I no longer remember (he later became president of UF's student body and a member of the Board of Regents for Florida's state university system) drove me to Shands Hospital, the University's teaching hospital. There I encountered the first pitfall in that popular means to solve America's health care crisis – having the indigent get emergency room care, never pay their bills, and pass on the costs to the insured: Emergency room care can be horribly haphazard.

I arrived in the middle of the night. The neurologist didn't arrive until morning. I was in the tender care of a gang of young internists with a (not entirely unwarranted, I suppose) idee fixe that any strange symptoms exhibited by a college kid without clear and obvious physical debility must be caused by drug abuse. Straight and alert as I had been my entire life to this point, I bridled at the suggestion as the eager young medicos tried to make me walk straight lines (I couldn't), react to reflex tests (I didn't), and explain to them all the mental stress I must be under as it was finals week. I was feeling content as a sparrow until this tongue-tingling business began – you better believe I was enough of a hypochondriac to realize that was ominous. But since the staff assured themselves my problems were self-inflicted by drugs, they felt no compunctions about sticking me into a storage closet until morning. I summoned my friend Laurie by phone – we were supposed to drive back to our homes in Jacksonville the next morning. She held my hand and kept me company in the closet as I noticed my field of vision rapidly and inexorably splitting into two equal fields separated by about 15 degrees of arc.

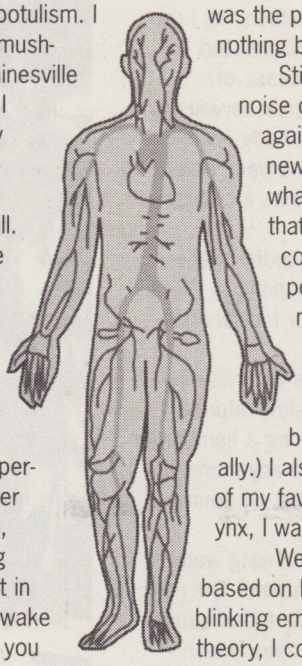
In the morning, the neurologist seconded the opinions of the night staff: I was just under stress and/or on drugs (they at least pretended to believe my denials), and that I ought to just go home and rest. I was desperate to believe this, so Laurie drove us the hour and a half home, as two images of the familiar world spun dizzily past me and tingling nausea took full possession of my body.

After being deposited at my parent's house, a phone call summoned me across the room to the phone, which I managed to answer

uncomfortable. I want to be able to open my eyes and scream, but some force is keeping me

even as I fell to the kitchen floor. It was my mother. Just fine, Mom, just can't stand up. With a motherly rush, she came home from work and my long winter of discontent with the American medical system began in earnest.

The doctors who questioned me upon my processing into the hospital maw were far more curious than the ones in Shands, more willing, it seemed, to entertain a wide and grotesque range of possible causes of my behavior – including, it seemed, AIDS, though I know of no symptoms of that syndrome that corresponded to any of my current difficulties. Still, I was asked about my sexual activities and partners, eating of canned foods, etc. Then, the first drama of my hospital captivity began: Two doctors warred over varying diagnoses of my problem. One pinned it, correctly as it turned out, on Guillan-Barre Syndrome; the other was a partisan for botulism. I was harangued with probing questions about canned mushrooms with the same vigor the bozos at Shands in Gainesville exhibited about magic mushrooms. "No mushrooms!" I insisted. But with food paranoia eating its way into my brain, I began retrospectively finding something suspicious and alien about those Lucky Charms I had been eating regularly for the week leading up to my downfall. Hadn't there been eerie signs of tampering around the box's edge...? Shortly, the botulism doctor disappeared from the case.



Guillan-Barre is highly recommended for hospital devotees – you'll experience the full range of what modern medical care at others' expense has to offer. (Read popular novelist Joseph "Catch-22" Heller's *No Laughing Matter*, for another, older man's personal account of his grapplings with Guillan-Barre. Other celebrity victim: Andy Griffith.) Weeks in intensive care, weeks surviving only on the mercy of a huge wheezing machine pumping air through a tube jammed into a slit in your throat. Tracheotomies performed while you are awake and fully conscious, staring with sanguine curiosity as you feel a peculiar tugging on your throat. Seven i.v.'s at once, including the classic jugular i.v., which again require surgery on your neck with full consciousness. Lots of Valium. A pair of spinal taps and two doses of electroshock therapy. The electroshock was allegedly for diagnostic purposes, to see if my nerves could still conduct electricity. They could, believe me, they could. For those contemplating it, never in my privileged white boy life have I known more terror, pain, and helplessness than during electroshock.

And even more: Constant enemas. Plasmapheresis (that cool Keith Richards routing where all your blood gets filtered out of you and through machines that somehow "clean" it – I was treated to this three times). Weeks of physical therapy when the paralysis departs, learning to walk again, straining to lift one pound balls, with your entire musculature reduced to the texture of 30-minute-chewed Bazooka gum after six weeks of enforced idleness. Angry lectures from toughlove surgeons disgusted by your inability to "stop whining and take responsibility for your recovery." That irreplaceable moment when you realize you can't, no you can't, breathe at all anymore and your gasps and chokes attract a bevy of nurses who drag you into intensive care and as the gurney rattled down the hallway you realize you are in fact moments from death. A couple of completely sleepless nights and six weeks of no more than four hours of sleep a night because you are forced to lie flat on your back – a position in which you've never been able to comfortably sleep.

And between it all, boredom. Daily visits from family, and occasional ones from friends. Yes, in these crises one learns who one's real friends are, or at least which of one's friends have lots of free time to hang around hospitals. Kip never misses a day, and even brought comic books and anarchist philosophy to read to me. Being able to hold a book myself would have made the whole experience much more of a holiday. When I had recovered enough to sit up in bed, my parents tried rigging up a sort of music stand contraption to sit on my chest and hold magazines open for my pleasure, but it didn't work.

No reading? All the better, perhaps. Yogis go through great strain to hold the same posture, eliminate all worldly concerns – here was a ticket to Nirvana handed to me, no effort. All the worries of the body were beyond me, even relatively simple ones like breathing. All the air and nutrients I required were pumped directly into my veins and lungs. Physical lust was eliminated. All needs taken care of, it was the perfect opportunity to lift myself up mentally, confronting nothing but the inside of my own head for six weeks straight.

Still, I found myself unable to escape the petty mental noise of day-to-day life. I hope to never have this opportunity again, but if I do I vow to compose an epic in verse, invent a new philosophical system or language, or at least figure out what I really think about the various philosophical lacunae that I'm normally too busy shoveling through my head with constant and incessant reading to really attempt to incorporate, judge, and balance. At the very least, I promise not to watch any *Rocky* movies, or *Pretty In Pink*, both of which were shown to me on the VCR that my parent's got a hardship exemption to allow to be brought into my intensive care room. (*Rocky IV* – the one where he beats the commie's ass – was strangely inspiring, actually.) I also got to see *Marx Brothers Go To The Circus* – not one of my favorites, but since my breathing tube cut through my larynx, I was unable to make my wishes about anything known.

We tried developing a makeshift communications system based on having my interlocutors talk through the alphabet and I blinking emphatically when the proper letter came up. Thereby, in theory, I could spell out simple requests like "light" (on or off), "Pillow" (move, adjust) or "Lung" (suction out). I contracted pneumonia in the hospital, causing one of my lungs to collapse, and requiring technicians to come by every few hours and slide a suction tube down into my lungs to suck out the mucus. When I needed something of the sort, I'd let my arm drop, the one not pincushioned with i.v's, and the maraca taped to it would signal a nurse. The nurses were, every one of them, recent Filipina immigrants, and had some trouble with the language as well as the subtleties of this whole eyeblink/spelling business.

They never realized that this system required starting the alphabet over after the first letter had been nailed. This made words like "light" impossible to spell, since upon reaching "l" in her tortuous trek through the English alphabet, she would then proceed on from M to Z, whereas I would understandably fail to blink my one good eye (the other one was patched, to deal with the double vision). She would get frustrated with my stupidity and stalk out, light still on, phlemgh unsuctioned, pillow unadjusted or whatever my petty plight happened to be.

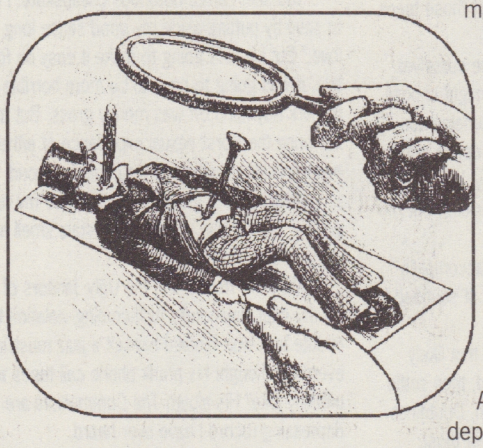
So I lay, and I thought. "Thought" is a bit too noble a term for the mindless woolgathering that occupied me. No heavy philosophizing or meditation, no; a good 60 percent of my thoughts were meaningless reminiscence about, mostly, sex and food. Mostly, really, food. I was by no means hungry in the normal sense – all my nutritional needs were being met by liquid poured through tubes directly into my stomach – but boy, do ones mouth and teeth miss the feel of food. I dreamed of what I would eat when I could again;

from being able to do that. I start to freak, and hyperventilate, I'm panicking as I begin to feel a

profligate fantasies of endless gluttony, loving remembrances of past meals, thinking of what five foods I'd pick if I could have endless supplies of only those five for the rest of my days.

Oh, sure, I would occasionally deliberately attempt to work my brain by making up plots for stories or composing little ditties on my memory of my little casio, but I was confronted quickly with my first lasting lesson in how tone-deaf and musically ungifted I am – a lesson I've parleyed into a typically fruitless habit of playing bass in punk rock bands.

Between food fantasies, I'd take the occasional side trip into delirium, like when I saw – literally saw, and not in my "mind's eye" either, but like a cartoon projected in front of me – myself being condemned to Hell. It was animation as designed by Michelangelo. I saw God as Michelangelo portrayed him, pointing down his finger at Man, at me, but not to gift with life but condemn to torment. As he pointed, the scene around me shifted violently, no longer the cool azure of heaven but a swirling, darkening mass of air and smoke, plunging through vivid ancient blue, a blue getting darker and fiercer and slowly fading to red and a chaotic vortex of darker and darker red red and redder that swirled my head and my body with it, and as I whirled deeper and deeper and closer to the center the red became black and I knew my destination was a pit of darkness so intense I'd never return. My delirium was then shattered by a nurse puttering about. I had seen my future.

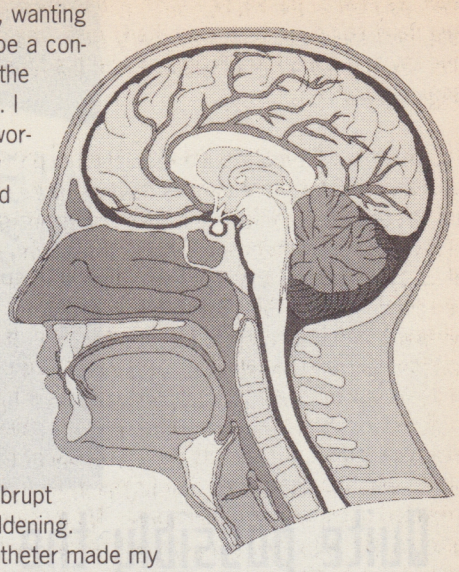


I learned deep and enduring lessons about the essential banality of my brain when left to its own devices. While any good Greek or German could have deduced all sorts of first principles about the nature of existence, or rediscovered geometry, I imagined in vivid detail what it would be like to have all the baked ziti I could eat, forever!

In classic literary analysis, this was a story of man vs. nature. While in a literal sense man—me—won (I'm still alive), I was a deeply shattered man. I bore up under the mental pressure not at all well—my glum depression led my lover of the past 18 months to leave me. (In later years, to be fair to someone who is still much beloved by me, she insists the paralysis had nothing to do with it.) I delved into almost endless depths of maudlin, self-indulgent self-glorification. The first words I spoke to my darling one when the breathing tube was removed from my throat was a recitation of lines from Dylan Thomas about "time held me green and dying/though I sang in my chains like the sea." Beautiful words, and would that they were true. My actual behavior was more like whining in my chains like a feeble dentist's drill.

With the breathing machine unhooked, I left intensive care and returned to occasional solid foods. I was still connected to my jugular i.v. and those two beloved plastic tubes that were my lifelines both to easy sustenance and the quick removal of said sustenance: my nose feeding tube and penis catheter.

I blessedly have no memory of the insertion of the latter. The nose tube business, though, was fascinating. A nurse manually slides, then shoves, it up your nostril, way up, further than you can even get your pinkie finger, and then you feel it tickling the back of your throat. You are told to keep swallowing, keep swallowing, hard, harder, and that thin sliver of plastic becomes a part of you, snaking down your esophagus, wanting nothing more than to be a conduit between you and the nutrient fluid you need. I began to treasure it, worrying it a trifle with my fingers when I regained use of them, flaking away at the dried blood that was customarily caked around it. When it came time to remove the feeding tube, the nurse just grabbed it and yanked, hard and quick. The feeling of abrupt abandonment was saddening.



The penis catheter made my eventual desultory and sad attempts at masturbating difficult. I could only manage to get 3/4 erect and then it would ache. I swear I remember coming once or twice, but that surely would have clogged the catheter so perhaps I am fantasizing.

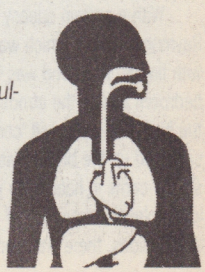
When they disconnected whatever kept the catheter inside me—the engineering is beyond my understanding—its departure was curious and unprecedented, feeling like a huge and troublesome bowel movement only through the urinary tract, something large and thick moving through you and inexorably out. And within a few days, expense mounting and my presence no longer desired, I too was out of the hospital, but far from well. I lay around in bed at home for weeks, with occasional visits from a physical therapist. For six months thereafter, I could walk only with help of a cane and see only with help of the eyepatch that prevented the lingering double vision from driving me mad. The delicate tracking muscles of the eyes were the last to regain their full functioning.

Advice if this happens to you? Try not to be anyone's dependent. The illness struck conveniently just in time for my parent's to strike me as a dependent from that year's tax forms, so they couldn't be held legally liable for the bills—which were enormous, $60,000 dollars MORE than my insurance covered. Also, it helps to have a tiny net worth, so that you aren't worth concerted and continuous legal sharkery on the part of the hospital to make you pay off. (For the cost of a few hours of a lawyer's time, and the threat of bankruptcy, the hospital settled for the insurance money.)

Friends tell me I became a much calmer person after this experience. I can't tell. It cost me a lot of money, the love of a good woman, and a great deal of self-respect. In the decade since then, I've regained much of what I lost. I still swear, however, that the tips of my fingers have retained a residual numbness and lack of tactile sensation. Does adversity make one a better person? My Zen response is: "Would you like a rusty nail through your foot?"

✦ ✦ ✦

Brian Doherty runs Cherry Smash Records, publishes SURRENDER, and writes on politics and culture for publications ranging from SPIN to REASON, from NATIONAL REVIEW to SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, from THE FREEMAN to the LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL. He lives in L.A.



sticky ice cold prickly claw-hand kneading my ass cheeks like Playdoh. For some reason I start

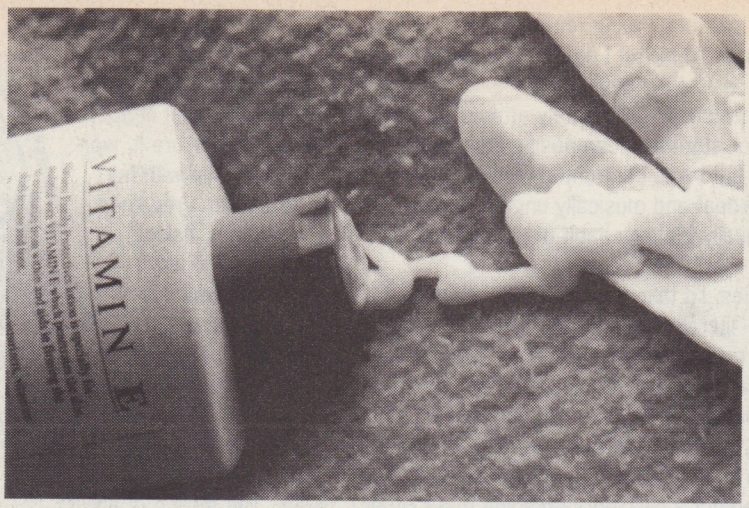


PHOTO BY SUGAR LEVINE: A JAPANESE FOOD LOVIN SAGITTARIUS

Quite possibly the most horrific thing I've ever done

BY CONNIE MARBLE

Once upon a time, in a remote college town nestled high amongst redwood trees and sylvan meadows, two obnoxious teenagers were drawn together by a shared affection for trashy pop culture, pranks, and bad rock and roll. One of those teens was me, and the other was my good friend Raymond.

One fateful evening, Raymond and I were pondering how we might amuse ourselves until bedtime. Our lovely town was not lacking in cultural amenities. Why, we might choose to attend a Lesbians for Organic Tampons rally, or a workshop on low-cost gamelan construction. Perhaps we'd care to venture down to a dingy cafe to choke down dense whole wheat pizza while local musicians played dope-hobbled versions of "Dark Star." Yes, any number of delightful and well-meaning entertainments were available for the asking, but Raymond and I were entirely too surly to endure a single one.

With sinking hearts we realized that the best we could possibly hope to accomplish was the classic lame date evening: dinner, conversation, followed by a movie. It sounded so tedious! And we weren't even dating!

So it was with minimal enthusiasm that we contemplated the experience that likely stretched before us. We would dine at one of the boring dives we could afford, then settle our lardy butts into the lumpy seats of one of the three movie theaters in town. Doubtless all that would be showing would be some mainstream Hollywood crap or one of those incompetent "cult movies" that were eternally being foisted off on us because we were college students. "Raymond," I said, "this sucks. You're not even getting laid, and I'm not even getting dinner and the movie for free. What's the fucking point?"

I should perhaps mention that we were both rather heavily under the influence of John Waters at this stage in our lives. Raymond and I took great pleasure in behaving terribly in public, attempting to foster reputations as true contenders for the *Pink Flamingos* title of "The Filthiest People Alive."

This happened a long time ago, and so I really can't tell you whose bright idea it was that both situations be, at least partially, rectified. I've got to think that it must have been mine, because had Raymond suggested such a thing I would probably have decked him. But the important thing is that it was determined that if I would masturbate Raymond to orgasm, he would then reciprocate by buying dinner and the movie tickets. I remember chortling over what a disgustingly horrible idea it was— "This is without a doubt the most hideous thing I have ever even *contemplated* doing!" Of course once the idea was broached neither of us dared to back down. It was *going* to happen. The only question was how.

With a certain queasy glee, I took the situation... firmly in hand. We retired to Raymond's room, which was furnished in early American cheese, with windows blacked out with tin foil. Raymond was then living in a converted dentist's office, and his long narrow bedroom had all the atmosphere of the examination room it had once been. "Lie down on the bed. Make yourself 'comfortable.'" I leered. Spying a box of hair-dye on the floor, I snatched up the brittle plastic gloves that were affixed to the instruction sheet. "These should come in handy. Do you have any... hand lotion?" I had a vague notion that hand lotion played some sort of role among prostitutes who worked the massage parlor circuit, and besides, there was something so seedy about the stuff. Raymond was squirming around, still fully clothed, trying to convince himself and perhaps me that we didn't really have to go through with this ghastly thing. But of course we did.

You see, I am a notorious cheapskate. I was already counting the money I was going to save by putting aside my good sense long enough to complete this misguided "act of love." But I wasn't going to make it easy on Raymond. No, if I was going to go through with this, it was going to have to be more horrible than anyone could possibly imagine. To simply jerk Raymond off was merely gross. But to do it with props and atmosphere, to make it bar none the worst sexual experience of either of our young lives, now *that* would be an accomplishment of which we could be proud!

Wearing both gloves at once made my right hand into a big scratchy paw. Slathered in generic hand lotion, it gave off a stale smell and ugly squelching sounds. All that was missing was a little mood music.

Ah, John Trubee and the Ugly Janitors of America. Of course. What better soundtrack for my dear Raymond's forthcoming violation than the bitter ranting of Trubee, a bloated hirsute hulk who fancied himself a jazz musician, and whose life had been ruined because everyone thought his prank phone call tapes were hilarious, and his serious music an unfunny joke? His album *The Communists are Coming to Kill Us* is probably the most depressing record I have ever heard.

And so against a sonic backdrop of poor Trubee sneering his vile fantasies about "Mr. Cool," who was able to penetrate snotty college girls at will, Raymond and I gritted our teeth and consummated our friendship. Just to make certain he wasn't having *too* good a time, I made a point of cackling evil laughter right in his face and yelling "Hurry up!" The details of the actual event are thankfully vague. I don't think it took *too* long. I left the room while Raymond tidied up, shaking my head at just how low we had managed to sink.

Did I get a delicious restaurant dinner? Man, would *you* have had an appetite after that? Raymond scrounged something up in the kitchen, then drove us to the movies. And what did we see? *That* I remember. Oddly enough, it was a new John Waters movie. I settled into my seat hoping for some hardcore sleaze to eclipse the memory of what had just transpired.

Yeah, right. The movie was *Hairspray*, Waters' sweet little mainstream sell-out picture. Watching it made me feel, somehow, even dirtier than I had before. But I got over it.

In the car on the way back from the movies, we swore that we would never tell another living soul what had transpired that evening. Of course I soon broke this vow, making a special point of telling the entire sordid tale to folks who had not yet met Raymond, but who likely would do so before long. He got used to people refusing to shake his hand on first meeting (by rights that should have been my fate!), or guffawing on hearing his name. I'd like to apologize to him here for being such a louse, but *everyone* who knows me at all knows I can't keep a secret.

Regardless, Raymond remains pretty much my best friend. And I'm pleased to report that nothing like this has *ever* happened between us again. Yet.

* * *

Connie Marble has once been called Alice, amoung other things.

thinking of the Kingdom songs I used to sing in church and that calms me down. My heavy

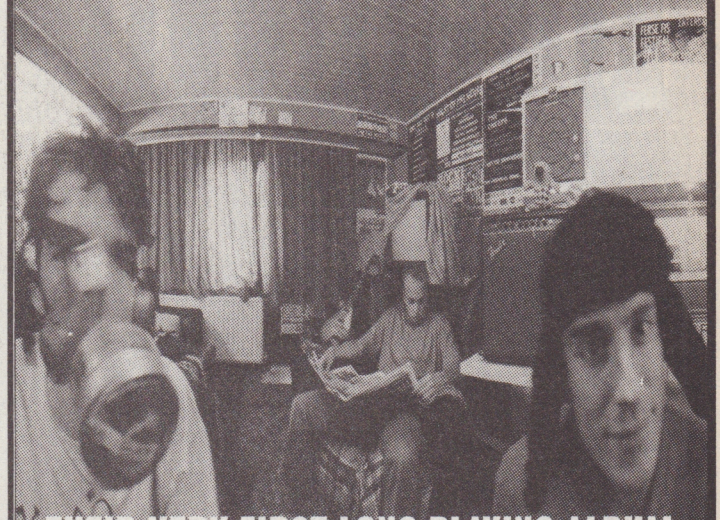
GET BUST-ED!

The New Girl Order begins with BUST—the magazine for women who have something to get off their chests!

Subscribe now and get four issues of BUST for only $12. Just send your name, address and $14 ($12 + $2 postage) in cash, check or money order to: BUST, P.O. Box 319, Ansonia Station, NY NY 10023. ORDER TODAY!

Surgery for Zebra

METAL MOLLY



THEIR VERY FIRST LONG PLAYING ALBUM.
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK IT IS.

With "ORANGE" and "SILVER"

Belgium's finest export since the waffle

SILVERTONE RECORDS

41588-2/4 © 1996 Zomba Recording Corporation

a tribal-industrial assault on the music of the world

'TCHKUNG

Debut CD on Tim/Kerr Records

post world handbook

644 830 118-2

Tim/Kerr Records P.O. Box 42423 Portland, Or 97242

Tim/Kerr

NEUROTIC OUTSIDERS

Steve Jones, John Taylor
Duff McKagan & Matt Sorum

First it was a gig at Sunset Strip's
Viper Room.
Then it was a tour.
Now it's a Goddamn
debut album, featuring "Jerk"

Produced by Jerry Harrison

www.neuroticoutsiders.com.

MAVERICK

FRANK'S PASSION

By Mikki Halpin

© 1996, 1997

EXTERIOR, JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT

A group of little hispanic boys on a camping trip with their Cub Scout troop are running through the cactus playing Cowboys and Indians. One little boy is running along, shooting his little gun, when he trips over something. He gets up, brushes himself off, looks down, and he realizes it wasn't a log. He nudges the thing, and it rolls over – it's a man, a dead man. As the body rolls over, one arm flings out and we see a strange, Christ-like wound on the palm of his hand. The boy opens his mouth to scream and a hand closes over it.

TITLES

(V/O DURING TITLES)

A common assumption widely mistaken is that we die only once, the final tick of the physical heart that lets the sheet be pulled over our eyes and a call placed to the mortician. The literature of Christian saints though, runs deep with another kind of mortality: the death of the self. Life does not expire, but a way of life, and the corpse of worldly ways is buried with unpompous finality.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT, A FEW MINUTES LATER

The scout leader/father is searching the body while the troop sits in a row, glumly watching him. The scout leader pulls various things from the DRIFTER's pockets: bullets, a knife, condoms, homeopathic medicine – everything a modern warrior needs. But in the inside pocket of the DRIFTER's jacket, slowly, the man pulls out a Polaroid picture. He looks at it strangely, closely. The camera pulls back and we see the man holding the picture up to compare it with the row of uniformed boys staring back at him.

CU POLAROID: Eerily, the photo is also of a young, Mexican-looking boy in a cub scout uniform.....

DISSOLVE TO INTERIOR POLICE DEPT, SHERIFF'S OFFICE

CU OF THE SAME POLAROID

SHERIFF is sitting behind his desk, holding up the Polaroid and staring at it. In front of his desk a deputy shifts his weight uneasily.

DEPUTY: That's all we found on him. Maybe he was some pervert, maybe he was stalking the kids or something.

SHERIFF: (not taking his eyes from the photo) No...he wasn't stalking them....

He puts the photo down, looks briefly at the deputy, then reaches over and takes a file from a cabinet behind him and removes some photos from the file. He spreads them on his desk.

CU SHERIFF'S DESK

It is a series of photographs like the one from the body... of the same boy.

PHOTO MONTAGE

We see newspaper clippings detailing the story, twelve years before, of a little boy, Francis Garcia, who was lost in the nearby woods while on a camping trip with his Scout troop. He was never found, but his Polaroid, with a series of self-photos, was recovered. The grainy photographs accompanying the stories are also of the little boy in the Polaroid.

HEADLINES INCLUDE:

"Searchers Comb Mountain for Scout Lost Since Friday", "Footprints Lift Hopes of Crew Seeking Scout", "Trail Grows Faint in Search for Boy Scout", "Father Has No Hard Feelings for Scout Master", "Boy Scout Still Missing – Fear He Was Attacked by Wolves", "Missing Scout Apparently Took Picture of Himself", "Scout Leader Exonerated for Lost Hiker Under his Care", and finally, "Searchers Abandon Hope for Boy Scout Lost in Mountains".

SOUND MONTAGE

During photo montage we hear sound bytes of local newscasters discussing the lost boy and the search. We also hear sirens, sounds of people trampling through brush, calling for "Francis", and "Frank", in English and in Spanish. We also hear wolves howling. Lastly, we see two dental charts being compared side by side. One is of "John Doe," and one is of the little boy Frank Garcia. The two transparencies begin to merge, and are laid over one another... They match.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR

As the Sheriff drives, we see the images of the surrounding deserts and mountains, as seen through his windshield, and occasionally his hands on the wheel (his POV). As he drives, in the arid landscape above the harsh, forbidding hills and the dry, painfully blue sky, we see various visions of the Sheriff. The little boy, Francis Garcia, from above, appears and morphs into various configurations: fatter, thinner, aging, angry, with a beard, etc. They are a little like police artist renderings of a missing person – if the police artist was Salvador Dalí.

SHERIFF (V/O)

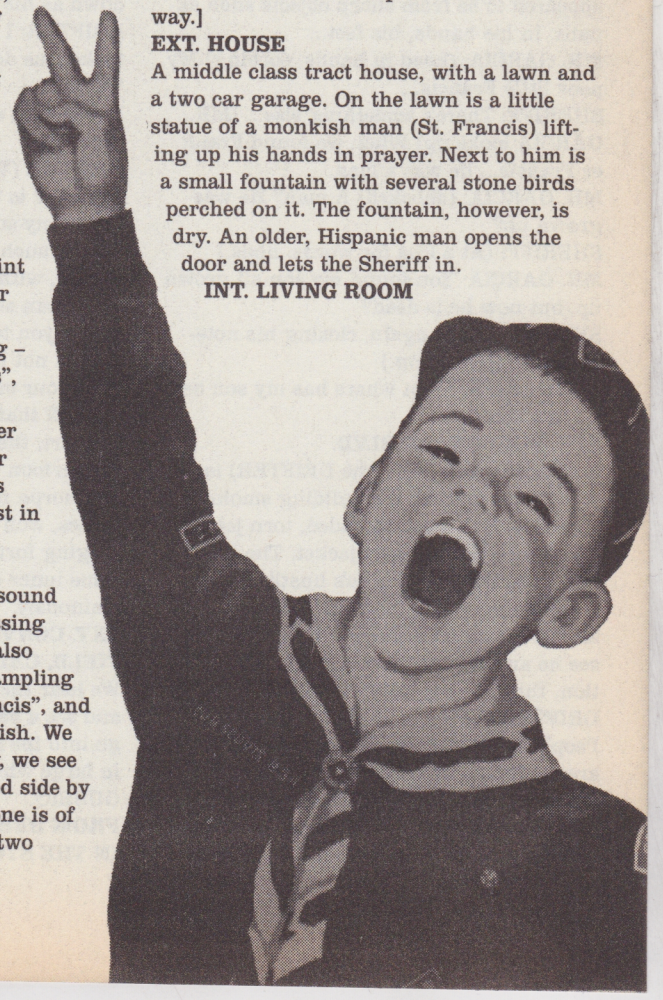
I swear I shall tell the truth. Lord, aid my memory, enlighten my mind, do not permit me to utter a single word I might later regret.

I tremble, because many times I find I cannot distinguish between what is true from what is false. Francis runs in my mind like water. He changes faces; I am unable to pin him down. Was he short? Was he tall? I cannot put my hand over my heart and say with certainty. He often seemed squat to me, thick protruding lips, hairy ears erect like a rabbit's and listening intently, to both the visible and invisible worlds.... [The landscape gradually becomes more and more populated as the visions subside. The car drives past some slum-like shanties with Hispanic families outside and into a more affluent area. He pulls into a driveway.]

EXT. HOUSE

A middle class tract house, with a lawn and a two car garage. On the lawn is a little statue of a monkish man (St. Francis) lifting up his hands in prayer. Next to him is a small fountain with several stone birds perched on it. The fountain, however, is dry. An older, Hispanic man opens the door and lets the Sheriff in.

INT. LIVING ROOM



breathing subsides and I can open my eyes. To my surprise, I'm floating suspended

With the windows closed and tightly shuttered to keep out the heat, the room is cramped and oppressive. The feeling is exaggerated by the clutter of votive images, hunting trophies, and memorabilia everywhere – including a signed photograph of Ronald Reagan. A large television with the sound turned down has a religious program on. A woman's face fills the screen. She speaks in Spanish, imploring the viewers to do something; a tear runs down her cheek. At the bottom of the screen large letters read CALL SISTER CLAIRE NOW. The man's name is MR. GARCIA. He gestures for the SHERIFF to sit down, then takes a seat himself when the Sheriff refuses.
MR. GARCIA: Yes, SHERIFF, you wanted to see me?
SHERIFF: (uneasy) Well, yes, you see, MR. GARCIA, the thing is... (blurts) We found your son. Frank.
MR. GARCIA: (shocked) My son?
His eyes travel to a school photo on the wall, from a long time ago, in which we recognize the boy. He licks his lips.
MR. GARCIA: In the woods?
SHERIFF: Well, yes, in the woods, but the thing is...
MR. GARCIA: (interrupting) How did he die?
SHERIFF: (glad to revert to officialese, flips open a notebook) The cause of death was (stutters a bit) he bled to death.
MR. GARCIA: Bled to death? How was he wounded?
SHERIFF: He had a series of wounds, they appeared to be from sharp objects such as nails, in his hands, his feet...
MR. GARCIA: (head in hands, sobbing) My poor little Francis...
SHERIFF: There's something else... (MR. GARCIA looks up) When we found Frank, er Francis... he was a man.
MR. GARCIA: (shocked) A man? He was grown up?
SHERIFF: (At a loss for words, nods.)
MR. GARCIA: You found my son all grown up, but now he is dead?
SHERIFF: (Nods again, closing his notebook and getting up.)
MR. GARCIA: Then where has my son been all this time?
EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD.
A thin, hispanic teen (the DRIFTER) is leaning up against the building smoking a cigarette. He's wearing faded, torn jeans and a very beat up jean jacket. The kid looks alert but wary – he's hustling.
A car pulls up and an older, wealthy, Mexican man rolls down the window. We see he and the boy have a brief conversation, then the boy gets in the car.
DRIFTER (V/O)
People think they are sinners, but they aren't. People think they need to be punished, but they don't. Having a disease is not a sin. You can kiss a leper but still not become one. Oh, my brother, I embrace you, I adore you...
INT. HOTEL BEDROOM
The Mexican man from the car is lying on the bed, looking exhausted. Around the room are various trusses, enemas, whips, and other artifacts of discipline. Apparently a pretty heavy scene has just gone down.
The boy is leaning against the window, smoking a cigarette. He's wearing only briefs and an open, khaki shirt.
The man begins flipping through the Bible on the table. He waggles it at the DRIFTER.
MAN: Read any of this lately?
DRIFTER: (not looking up) I don't put much stock in books.
MAN: (smiling, trying to be hip) Is that a Boy Scout uniform?
The DRIFTER looks down at the shirt as though this is the first time he's seen it, fiddles with the collar a little.
DRIFTER: Yeah, I guess it is.
MAN: Don't tell me you were a Boy Scout.
DRIFTER: (putting on his pants) It's just a uniform. It doesn't mean anything.
MAN: (sensing the moment is over) Can I ask you a question?
The DRIFTER doesn't answer. He's staring out the window, across the street at the St. Francis Hotel's blinking sign. He starts to walk toward the door, scooping up the money on the table as he passes it.
MAN: (Sitting up) Why do you do this? I mean – I can tell you don't enjoy it. And it's dangerous. You could get hurt, or sick, or worse.
The DRIFTER pauses in the doorway, looks down as his shirt again.
DRIFTER: I guess you could say my father makes me do it.
VISION
Robed man and wolf. Swallows circling overhead.
DRIFTER (V/O)
My mind is full of unborn images... they crowd my soul. Brother Wolf, why do you harbor such violence? Within your very nature, within your soul, is such love, that only I can see and the birds who sing of it praise you to the heavens, my brother. Why do you not heed the call of good and forsake your criminal ways?
VISION that we see during the voiceover. In a desert, the DRIFTER's body morphs, as in the cartoon show *The Incredible Hulk*. But the morph never completes itself – it simply pulses, wolf-like, bestial suggestions bulging forth, then subsiding, suggesting some inner conflict. Birds circle overhead, ominously.
EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE, BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA
We hear the ding dong of the door chime and see a bearded guy in jeans and a t-shirt go into the store. On the back of his t-shirt, in large white letters, we read his name: GUBBIO.
FROM HERE ON WE SEE THE SCENES IN THE STORE AS SHOT FROM THE SURVEILLANCE CAMERA
INT. CONVENIENCE STORE
It's cramped, hot and dusty inside. Some of the stock looks like it's been there for years – and you almost expect to see ghost shoppers lurking in the aisles. Behind the counter, looking bored, is a young Hispanic girl, with heavily teased long dark hair, bluish-black lipstick, and a few discreet scrollwork tattoos. This is CLAIRE. (She is also the woman we saw on the TV in MR. GARCIA's house).
The door chimes again and the DRIFTER comes in. He smiles at CLAIRE.
DRIFTER: Hi.
CLAIRE: Hi.
The DRIFTER glances at GUBBIO, who is still wandering around. The DRIFTER smiles at CLAIRE again, brilliantly, and she smiles back.
DRIFTER: Can I get a pack of Marlboro Reds, please?
CLAIRE: Sure.
As CLAIRE starts to ring up the DRIFTER's purchases, GUBBIO suddenly lunges for the counter and pulls a gun. CLAIRE and the DRIFTER freeze.
GUBBIO: (smiling at the DRIFTER) This is your lucky day. (gestures with the gun) Go ahead, take your stuff.
GUBBIO flails with his arm and knocks down several cartons of cigarettes. He seems a little heady with the power the gun has given him. He thrusts a carton of Marlboros at the DRIFTER.
GUBBIO: Have some smokes on me!
He giggles, as the DRIFTER, keeping his eyes on the gun, gathers up the cigarettes.
DRIFTER: (mutters) Thanks, man.
The DRIFTER heads for the door.
GUBBIO, thinking the DRIFTER is on his way out of the store, turns and begins advancing on CLAIRE. She shrinks away, leaving him clear passage to the open cash register.
At the door, the DRIFTER hesitates and looks back.
GUBBIO grabs CLAIRE's arm and draws her toward him. A hand descends on his shoulder.
DRIFTER: Brother Gubbio...
The surveillance camera apparently shorts out and we see instead the DRIFTER's vision. The motorcycle on the front of Gubbio's t-shirt expands and dissolves into a series of weird images: a robed man taming a snarling wolf, a man atop a large church, throwing tiles down and shouting like a madman.
DRIFTER (V/O)
Brother Wolf, will you not be quiet so that I may speak?
INT. CONVENIENCE STORE
The surveillance camera has been restored and we again see through it. The store looks like a hurricane has hit it: the stock is in the aisles, the shelves teeter at precarious angles. We see the DRIFTER grab

slightly five feet above the bed. I scream and plop down on the bed, hard.

CLAIRE with one hand and scoop up the money from the register drawer with the other as they run out of the store. GUBBIO lies sprawled on the floor.

INT. CAR

The DRIFTER is driving, intently, scanning the rear view mirror for a tail. CLAIRE is staring at him, a little wide-eyed, and at the big cash wad, still in his hand. The DRIFTER looks over at her, sees she's looking at the cash, hands it to her. She hesitates.

DRIFTER: Take it.

CLAIRE: Don't – don't you want any of it?

DRIFTER: Owning anything means you end up having to defend it sooner or later. I don't want that.

CLAIRE is silent, thinking this over.

DRIFTER: (looking at her, continues) We're going to have to split up.

She opens her mouth to protest, but he takes no notice, formulating a plan.

DRIFTER: There's an intersection up ahead, you'll go one way and I'll go the other. (glances at her) There's some clothes in the back, you better change.

CLAIRE stares at him for a beat, then climbs over into the back seat, where she decorously changes into the clothes she finds in a duffle bag. She glances up, catching his eye in the rear view mirror. The DRIFTER focuses on the road. CLAIRE climbs back over into the front seat.

CLAIRE: How's that?

DRIFTER: (without looking at her) Fine.

He pulls into a sideroad near a large crossroads and gets out of the car. He stands, looking around like he's listening for something.

CLAIRE gets out of the car and stands beside him.

CLAIRE: What are you looking for? (pauses, gets no answer, goes on) Sometimes, do you ever see things without meaning to?

The DRIFTER looks at her suddenly, sharply.

CLAIRE doesn't notice, goes on.

CLAIRE: ...like a TV inside your head? Sometimes I can see things so clearly...

The DRIFTER grabs her shoulder, roughly, startling her, and holds her firmly, standing behind her.

DRIFTER: Hold still.

CLAIRE shuts up, obeys. Suddenly the DRIFTER flashes a large knife. Whipped out of nowhere, it glitters in the sun.

CLAIRE feels the wind whistle on her neck as the blade flashes down.

CLAIRE: Hey! What are you...?

The DRIFTER has just cut off most of her long hair. The shiny mass slithers to the ground. He slowly replaces the knife in his pocket as CLAIRE turns to look at him.

DRIFTER: They'll be looking for a girl with long hair. Come on.

He starts walking toward the crossroads, a forlorn spot in the midst of the flat desert plain, which we see also has a bus stop and a sad looking gas station. CLAIRE follows, trying to keep up with his longer stride. They reach the intersection.

The DRIFTER puts his hands on CLAIRE's shoulders, looks at her tenderly. She looks very young and vulnerable without her hair.

DRIFTER: Close your eyes.

CLAIRE does so.

The DRIFTER begins turning her around and around so she loses her sense of direction. Then he lets go of her.

DRIFTER: Keep twirling...keep your eyes shut...don't stop until I tell you to.

CLAIRE keeps twirling, around and around, her arms outstretched for balance. When she finally, staggeringly stops, and reopens her eyes, the world is whirling crazily. The DRIFTER is nowhere to be seen. She looks in every direction, dizzily, even running back to where she thinks the car was parked. She realizes she's not even sure which direction they came from.

CLAIRE returns to the bus stop and sits dejectedly on the bench. She opens the wad of money and begins to count it.

INT. CAR

We see the DRIFTER driving away through the desert, lifting a bottle of whiskey to his lips.

EXT. DESERT

The DRIFTER is staggering through the sand, waving the empty bottle of whiskey. He is sunburnt, his eyes are wild. He looks as if he has been wandering for days. He shouts, but no sound emits from his parched throat. Buzzards are already circling overhead. The DRIFTER rushes up to a cactus and embraces it.

DRIFTER: My betrothed, my spouse, the lovely Lady Poverty!

Pierced by the prickly cactus, he quickly backs off and staggers for a few more yards, then collapses.

INT. MENTAL WARD

A long row of beds, filled with lost and broken souls. We see some lying inert, fetal; some are animatedly talking and gesturing in silent, agitated conversation. Others drool and pick at themselves. An orderly and a doctor are standing near the bed on which sits the DRIFTER, who stares vacantly into space.

DOCTOR: (reading from a release form) "...and I voluntarily agree to undergo this treatment, in the hopes that it will cure or ease my condition." (pauses, looks at the DRIFTER) Do you understand?

The DRIFTER nods, blankly.

DOCTOR: Sign here.

He thrusts the clipboard under the DRIFTER's nose. The DRIFTER scrawls an X on it. The doctor nods at the orderly, who begins to hook up some electrodes to the DRIFTER's temples. As the current begins to flow, the DRIFTER speaks, woodenly.

DRIFTER: Brother Fire – who art nobler and more useful than most other creatures – I have always been good to you and always will be so for the love of him who created you. Now show yourself gentle and courteous with me and do not burn me more than I can stand.

DISSOLVE as we hear the sizzle of the device and the screams of the DRIFTER.

EXT. ANOTHER ANONYMOUS STREET

The DRIFTER is again leaning on the wall, smoking and waiting for a customer. He seems unchanged by the previous interlude, except for some very slight scars on his temples which we can discern.

The street seems quiet this night; finally he gives up and walks down the street toward

I run to turn the dimmer up and everything in the room looks normal. I quickly gather my

a boarded up building with a red tag "Earthquake Damage – Unsafe" on it. The DRIFTER lifts up some boards from across the entrance and goes in.

INT. SQUAT

The DRIFTER stands and blinks a bit, adjusting his eyes to the light.

INT. DINER

It's a little truck stop, with about four wooden picnic tables and a small counter with some stools. There's a TV in the corner and a forlorn plastic Christmas tree on the jukebox, beneath the sagging doorway. The employees are closing up.

RUBY: Whatcha doing tonight CLAIRE?

CLAIRE: Oh, I don't know, watch TV, I guess.

RUBY: TV? On Christmas? Why don't you come over to my place instead, honey?

CLAIRE: No, thanks, I really... just want to watch TV.

INT. SQUAT

A man, covered in rags, comes out of the shadows and advances on the DRIFTER. Others, gathered around a small fire, don't look up. Around the edges of the room we can see many shopping carts piled high with the possessions of the homeless man.

MAN: The police were here looking for you.

The DRIFTER, looking at the fire, says nothing, sways a little on his feet.

MAN: We don't need no trouble, man. (pause) I think you better leave.

Woodenly, the DRIFTER turns and goes out through the door.

INT. TRAILER

This is CLAIRE's house. She sits on the couchette, feet propped up, with a can of beer in her hand. She is watching TV, some kind of religious Christmas show.

CU TV

PREACHER: And on this day a child was born...

STATIC. The preacher's image is suddenly replaced with a street scene. A figure is walking down the street, alone, as shabby Christmas decorations fray in the wind. As the camera comes in closer, we see that it is the DRIFTER.

INT. TRAILER

The couchette is empty. CLAIRE's gone.

EXT. STREET

It's the same street we saw the DRIFTER walking down on CLAIRE's TV. The DRIFTER is huddled up against a building. He huddles further as a police cruiser passes by. Another car passes him, then makes a u-turn and returns, slowly. It pulls up next to the DRIFTER. He looks up.

CLAIRE rolls down the window. The DRIFTER gets in. She starts driving.

CLAIRE: I saw you.

The DRIFTER nods. She touches his temple.

CLAIRE: What happened?

DRIFTER: Nothing.

CLAIRE: How'd you get here?

DRIFTER: (laughing harshly) I took a vow of abstinence.

CLAIRE thinks for a minute.

CLAIRE: What does that mean?

DRIFTER: (gesturing) It means... opening yourself up. To choose your life – even if you choose to be poor – is as holy and as beautiful as if you choose to marry... (falters a bit) the most beautiful girl in the world.

The DRIFTER bites his lip, stares out the window.

CU CLAIRE'S PROFILE. She keeps her eyes on the road. They are on a freeway headed out of town, into the desert.

INT. CAR, LATER.

CLAIRE, still driving, looks exhausted. The DRIFTER seems to be pleading with her about something.

DRIFTER: Abstinence is not a negative, it is a broadening of yourself so that you can take in the whole world, and no longer be betrayed by your senses.

The DRIFTER suddenly raises up his hand, on which, miraculously, we suddenly see a grasshopper perched.

DRIFTER: The value of a creature, of any technology is its use for man. The value of man is his use for God.

He waves his hand like a conjurer. The grasshopper disappears.

CLAIRE takes her eyes from the road, stares at the DRIFTER.

DRIFTER: Some things cannot be explained by logic.

They pass a sign which reads "Joshua Tree National Forest." The DRIFTER looks out the window.

DRIFTER: I have to get out here.

EXT. CAR

We see the car screech to a halt, and the DRIFTER gets out. He waves goodbye and heads into the woods as the car quickly drives away.

INT. CAR

CLAIRE is driving, wiping tears from her face. She looks quickly in the rear view mirror, sees nothing.

EXT. FOREST. SAME CLEARING AS OPENING SCENE.

The DRIFTER strides through the desert, looking around as if looking for something familiar, a spark for his memory.

CU FEET OF STALKER

We cut to another set of feet following him. Although the stalker's feet seem to be gliding, skimming along above the ground, the sound of footsteps is loud, ominous, almost deafening, like a heartbeat. When we cut back to the DRIFTER, he is still trudging along, seemingly oblivious of the footsteps which we hear louder and louder, getting closer and closer.

The DRIFTER suddenly stops in a clearing. He closes his eyes and begins whirling around, arms outstretched, as he made CLAIRE do. He twirls and twirls, finally coming to a stop. He opens his eyes slowly. Cut to the DRIFTER's feet, which we see toe to toe with those of the stalker. Suddenly the peace is shattered. Everything moves very fast. The camera begins to jerk and dart about, giving rapid, falling, weirdly angled shots of the clearing and we hear the sounds of a struggle.

DRIFTER (V/O)

My father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name....

Through the V/O we hear the struggle, and several harsh stabbing sounds, hammering sounds, and through it the V/O of the Lord's Prayer. We see the image of a bird, like the ones we have seen throughout, slowly flying towards the forest from far away. As it draws closer, we see that it is not a bird at all, but a huge six-winged SERAPH.

DRIFTER (V/O)

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[The SERAPH is even more closely visible now. It is clutching a large cross with a man nailed to it. It is surrounded by indications of a blinding light. The sounds of the struggle and the breathing and stabbing sounds continue as well.] For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory... For ever and ever.

The freneticism of the struggle and the camera movement ceases. Everything is very still. We see the feet of the stalker (whose shoes look just like MR. GARCIA's) walk away from the body of the DRIFTER which lies as we saw when the little boy found him.

DRIFTER

(V/O)

I have done what was mine to do.

✦ ✦ ✦

Mikki Halpin graduated from BID to freelance writer and she is now the editor in chief of STIM. She is still working through her catholic issues.

belongings and throw on some clothes and dash out unto the street. My promoters check me

W·I·N RECORDS

RECORDS & MORE FROM THE LIKES OF...

ALOHA WEDNESDAY BENETT
CHARLES BROWN SUPERSTAR CRIB cut
DANNY FRANKEL PETRA HADEN
THE MAGIC PACER *Miss Murgatroid*
POLAR GOLDIE CATS Rod Poole
POOP ALLEY recess SOLID EYE
SPECULUM FIGHT THE UPHILL GARDENERS
WALDO THE DOG faced BOY

•FREE CATALOG BY MAIL•

POST BOX 26811 L.A., CA. 90026-0811 USA
Website: http://www.endless.com/winrecords/
Email: winrecords@aol.com
Distributed by: NAIL (888)NAIL-INC

Crash Course for the Ravers
A Tribute to the Songs of David Bowie

Swell • Treepeople • Capsize 7 • Fernando • Golden Delicious

King Black Acid • Spurge • Hazel • Ventilator • Mercury Rev

Quasi • The Magnetic Fields • J. Hell • The Dambuilders

undercover, inc.
P.O. Box 14561
Portland, OR 97293
Phone: (503) 230-7728
Fax: (503) 239-6558
mnkyshine@aol.com

• CATPOWER "UNDERCOVER" 7"
• BIRDDOG "KILLER" 7"

If you're a **bigot**, lazy, or a **punk phony**,
you will **hate** this record.

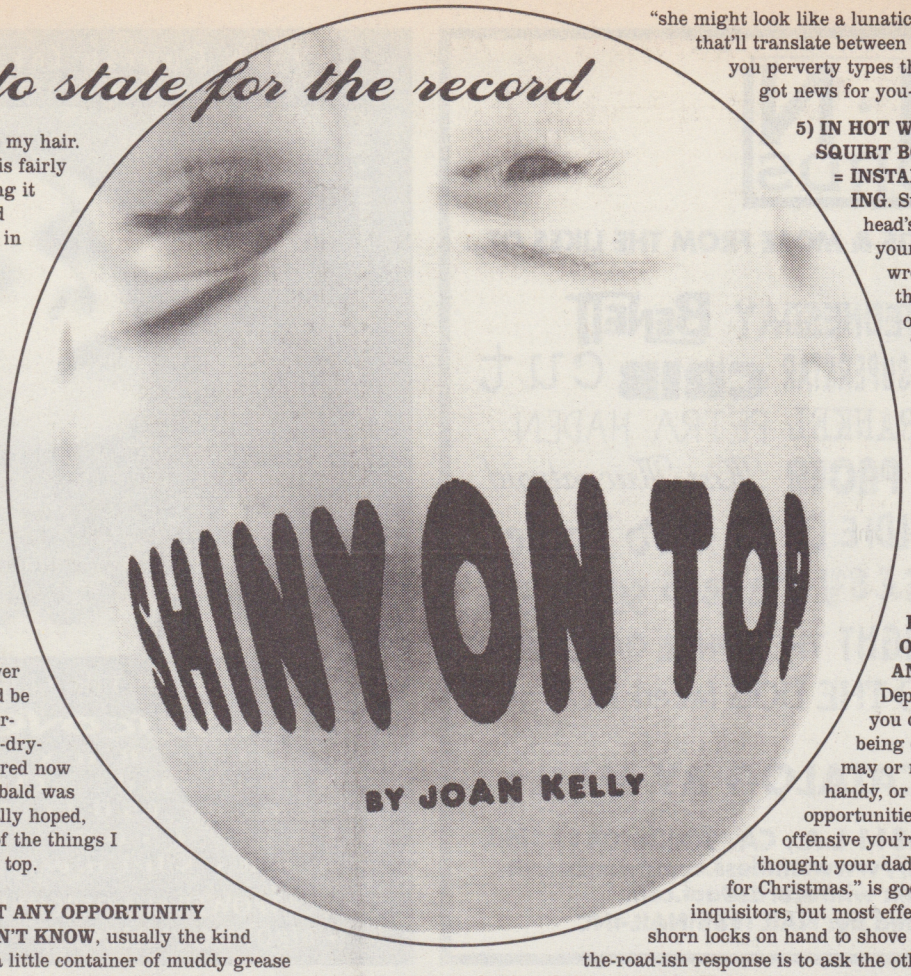
SCHLEPROCK

(America's) Dirty Little Secret

Featuring: "Suburbia"

© 1996 Warner Bros. Records Inc.

I'd like to state for the record



that I harbor no ill will towards my hair. As far as hair itself goes, mine is fairly inoffensive. I actually like having it around, just not on my head. I'd much prefer to keep it growing in the closet, with special lamps maybe, the way some people farm their own buds.

The first time I shaved my head I had no idea it would affect anything besides the expression on my mom's face once she got a look at me. I'd thought, "Eh, I'll look funny for a while, there'll be an awkward growing-out period, we'll all have a good laugh, and I'll be back to my original hairy state in time for my high school reunion,". But right away I noticed how much more free time I had as a baldo. It had never occurred to me what else I could be doing while I slaved away, lathering, rinsing, conditioning, blow-drying; Jesus Christ it makes me tired now just talking about it. But being bald was not as nuisance-free as I'd initially hoped, either. The following are some of the things I learned after going all shiny on top.

1) STRANGERS WILL LEAP AT ANY OPPORTUNITY TO TOUCH WOMEN THEY DON'T KNOW, usually the kind of strangers who seem to keep a little container of muddy grease nearby for touch-ups, in case their hands get a little too clean when they're not lookin'. A shaved head on a woman seems to be a siren call for touchy-feely types, especially to the packs of horny teenaged boys who hang out on the Venice Boardwalk. Many's the time I had to scramble around for the appropriate rejoinder to "If you let me rub your head, I'll let you rub mine, haw haw haw!" Sounds easy to you no doubt, but don't be deceived: teenage-boy-wit is nothing if not disarming in its pure impotence.

2) I HAVE A BEAUTIFUL SKULL. I think it's obscene that, as a woman, I'm badgered to "make the most of" my appearance, and at the same time expected to hide one of the few gifts god gave me under several inches of dead cells.

3) AGING HIPPIES ARE NOT ALL AS OPEN-MINDED AS SOME SEEM TO FANCY THEMSELVES. You know, the "do your own thing" vibe seems to have left some of these people about the same time as when they last bathed. I had one such burn-out approach me at my work and snarl "Bob Marley would roll over in his grave if he saw you!" Mr. ZZ-Top-beard seemed to be trying to articulate, in his sputtering fury, that my chromedome was an affront to all peace-loving, pot-smoking, hairy folk the world over. He thought I was a nazi skinhead is what it was. Apparently it slipped his patchouli-poisoned mind how much he surely disliked being associated with Charles Manson back in the early '70s, just for sporting the same hairdo. Although in this man's case, it was closer to a hair-don't, but perhaps that's just spite talking. In any case I still don't get why he thought, presuming I was a skinhead, that I'd care what a dead Bob Marley would or wouldn't do. P.S. Judgmental old farts aside, thanks for giving voluntary baldness an evil rep, goddamn Nazis.

4) PLENTY OF BOYS (AND REALLY ALL IT TAKES IS ONE, OKAY THREE AT THE MOST...JUST KIDDING MOM) DIG ON THE BALD LADIES. I thought for sure I'd never get laid again when I shaved my head, or at least not until it grew past the is-that-or-isn't-it-a-lesbian-hairstyle stage. In fact, I've gotten more attention from the fellas as a baldo than all my years as a longhair combined. Someone advanced the theory to me that for a woman to fuck with her appearance at all, especially in appearances-are-everything-L.A., people think she must have a shitload of self-confidence, which all the YM's and COSMO's insist is what really reels the guys in, (Besides knowing how to give a good blow job that is). Fucking COSMO. Anyway, I think that the boys who've approached me have been thinking more along the lines of "she might look like a lunatic, but just think how that'll translate between the sheets!" I know how you perverty types think, yes I do. And I've got news for you- you're only half right.

5) IN HOT WEATHER, NO HAIR + SQUIRT BOTTLE OF ICE WATER = INSTANT AIR CONDITIONING. Sure you'll look like your head's sweating, but that's your business. What's wrong with people that they can't leave each other alone with the "you're sweating!" remarks? God almighty.

6) PUTTING UP WITH THE CONSTANT DEMAND OF STRANGERS AND FAMILY TO KNOW "WHY DID YOU SHAVE YOUR HEAD?" TEACHES A PERSON TO BONE UP ON HER SOCIAL, OR ANTI-SOCIAL, SKILLS. Depending on your mood, you can either practice being diplomatic, which talent may or may not ever come in handy, or you can revel in the opportunities to find out just how offensive you're capable of being. "I thought your dad could use a new wig for Christmas," is good for obnoxious inquisitors, but most effective if you have your shorn locks on hand to shove at them. A middle-of-the-road-ish response is to ask the other person why they're not shaving their own heads. No one's yet given me a better answer for being hairy than I have for being bald.

7) YOU BLEED FOREVER IF YOU NICK YOUR SCALP.

8) NOBODY BUT ME EVER SEEMS TO TIRE OF SINÉAD O'CONNOR JOKES.

9) NO BAD HAIR DAYS EVER.

10) LOTS OF CUTE PEOPLE WILL WANT TO RUB YOUR FUZZY HEAD until you both slip into a rapturous stupor.

11) RUBBING YOUR OWN HEAD CAN, WITH THE PROPER FACIAL EXPRESSION, GIVE YOU THE APPEARANCE OF BEING A THOUGHTFUL, DEEP-FEELING SOUL.

12) FORTY-SOMETHINGS WITH MALE-PATTERN BALDNESS WILL CORNER YOU IN ELEVATORS AND INSIST, WITH A SNICKER, THAT THEIR BALDNESS WAS CAUSED BY SHAVING THEIR HEADS WHEN THEY WERE "ABOUT YOUR AGE".

Just as I got used to strangers asking my sexual orientation - none of whom were looking for a date I might add, the nerve of which still aggravates - I finally started letting my hair grow back, for reasons I still have trouble articulating. Maybe part of it was a sick sort of buckling-under to peer pressure. I mean, I did get a lot of remarks that I took for compliments, but I also got a steady stream of people chastizing me to "stop rebelling against [my] femininity". I didn't get tired of the mind-fuck of that so much as I got tired of trying to explain why that is a mind-fuck, to people who seemingly had time enough to psychoanalyze me, but not enough time to squeeze my response of "Bullshit" into their busy schedules. Yeah, there's a part of me that enjoyed the ability to provoke some fairly extreme reactions from people, if for nothing else than the opportunity to flush out the idiots and feel smugly superior by comparison. But if I go bald again, I'd like to think that it'll free me up for something besides asshole-baiting. Otherwise I'm not sure the trade off of less time in the bathroom for more time spent out in the world is worth it.

• • •

Joan (az502@lafn.org) works at a newsstand in West LA, and regularly cards 30 year olds who go there to buy cigarettes.

into the Beck Motel on Market Street. I'm feeling a little disturbed still, so I call and wake my

Selina's Little Tale of Passing Time

(it's different then passing gas) • Memory jogged by Michelle Hanes!

When I was seventeen, Michelle and I had taken the bus to go pick up Jesse Hernandez, her boyfriend at work. So we took the bus down to Melrose and arrived at his store at 4:00, at which time he said that he wouldn't be off 'till 6:00, and asked us to wait. Then he gave us a bag that had two joints in it, which was kind of weird because it just wasn't like Jesse to give away drugs. So we went in the alley behind Wacko and smoked out, which *now* when I think about it, smoking pot in an alley near a busy street like Melrose is something I would *not* do now; not to mention all of the bad experiences I've had so I'm *way* too paranoid – not of cops, of people. So we smoked one of the joints: at first we were having so much fun because we didn't encounter any people, but. then we walked around the building and back down Melrose. Suddenly we both felt like we were floating on clouds: it wasn't the ground, it was just *clouds*, which was not like any other pot experience I'd had. People kept looking at us, and I remember getting really angry and wanting to hurt them because they just *kept looking at us*, but luckily we were still walking on clouds. To this day we're still not sure what it was that made us feel like that, supposedly PCP will do that cloud thing to you, and I remember wanting to pinch people really badly too.

As we were walking I wanted ice cream *sooo* badly and we walked around *forever* trying to find a fucking ice cream shop. Finally we found a place, which is no longer on Melrose (years ago I tried to look for it, and *it's not there*. It's not Double Rainbow, and we don't know where it was. In fact, Michelle doesn't even remember anything about the ice cream). I remember we were in there and I wanted Mint Chip, which of course they didn't have, and the lady behind the counter was really mean and we just wanted to punch her in the face. I kept tasting and tasting all the flavors to find a suitable substitution for Mint Chip, and they were getting really annoyed with me. We finally got the ice cream, and after devouring it, we had to go to the bathroom.

So now we're walking everywhere and can't find a restroom, or no one will let us use theirs. Finally we got to use one in that fancy restaurant diagonally across from Soap Plant. When we went in, there was a girl in there who asked Michelle about her pink, patent-leather, pointed Docs, and inquired where she got them, so Michelle went into the toilet stall and launched into the story of how her friend Melinda bought them for her in London. When she finished peeing and came out, she sat down next to the girl and continued the shoe story while I went into the stall. The girl had just asked her one simple little question, and Michelle went on talking for practically an hour! I asked Michelle about this recently and she has no idea at all what she said to the girl, and doesn't know why she went on. Meanwhile I don't want to come out of the stall because I can hear her still talking about it, so I just sat on the toilet laughing because she was going on and on. When I did finally manage to come out, Michelle didn't stop, and the other girl is just sitting there — probably thinking "Ohmygod, I'm never going to ask anyone that question again!"

Finally Michelle stops and the girl jets out of there. We go back out and sit on the bench in front of Wacko and look at the big clock that used to be there, and it said 4:10! Now after getting stoned, walking forever in the clouds, having ice cream, and the hour-long bathroom shoe story, we couldn't believe it had only been ten minutes! So we sit for a couple hours, look up at the clock, and see that it's only 4:11. We're sitting in complete dead silence *forever*, more people walk by and we want to hurt them because they keep making noise and ruining everything. Then we start hearing the cars whooshh by, the drivers of which would be facing forward until they got to us and then would turn abrubtly to stare and then face forward again. Both of us remember this clearly, it freaked the fuck out of us at the time. I can still see some of the faces – it was really scary.

Somehow Michelle and I have some pictures from that day – I took a picture of her, and she took one of me, and both of us were holding flowers that someone must have given us. We have no recollection of how we actually got them, but there they are in the pictures. My face was all red, and my hair was blowing as if we were in the middle of a windstorm, and Michelle has an identical rose pose, and it wasn't even cold that day. So after all of this, we look up, and it's only 4:15! So after sitting a few more years, we decide we have to go to the bathroom again, so we take another hour to find a new bathroom as we didn't want to go back to the same one and face the shoe-girl. Finally we find one in the restaurant behind Johnny Rocket's. She went in first and then I went in. She tells me now that she just sat at this booth in the restaurant waiting for me. When I went in, I swear I was only in there for a couple of seconds. The time problem we'd been having was that we thought we were in places for a long time when it was only a bit, but I *knew* I was only in there for a couple of seconds.

So Michelle was having this time problem in the restaurant, and when the hostess asked if she could help, Michelle says, practically in tears, "I don't know, I'm waiting for my friend and she's been in there for such a long time." So they get the managers, and the busboys, and the waiters, and they're talking about breaking the door down to get me out of there, because Michelle had said, "I don't know if she's OK or not." So finally Michelle knocks on the door and asks, "Selina, are you OK?" So, I said something to the effect of "Yeah, I'm fine, be out in a second." And when I come out, there are all these people from the restaurant just standing there staring at me. She kept telling me, "You were in there for hours!" and seriously all I did was go in and go to the bathroom, and that was it, which must've taken all of thirty seconds. She kept insisting it was forever, but when we got back to the bench, and to the clock, it was only 4:20!

So back at the bench we just sat there and every few hours we'd look up to find that only seconds had elapsed. We went on another walk in an attempt to kill time, and came back to Wacko when it finally hit 6:00. At the pay phone in front of the store we were greeted by the sight of Jesse with this girl Marisa and this guy Chris. As we were walking up to them, Michelle looked at me and said, "she's with Jesse." We'd never met the girl before, we didn't witness anything incriminating; Jesse wasn't even standing next her, and there was nothing that would indicate they were together. All of us were supposed to go to a party together, and I pretty much thought she was nuts [I've since learned that Michelle's always uncannily correct about stuff like this when it comes to guys - she just knows] So we're driving, and Jesse and Chris get out to buy alcohol. As soon as they're gone, Michelle sweetly asks Marisa, "So, are you and Jesse together?" Marisa replies, "Yeah, we're going out." And Michelle says, "Oh really, because Jesse and I have been together for a few years now."

Upon receiving this bit of information, Marisa bursts into tears and starts wailing and crying all over Michelle, "I can't believe he did this to me!" on Michelle's shoulder, completely forgetting that Michelle's the actual girlfriend. Michelle kept repeating to me, "Get her...off me, get her...the fuck...off me!" And Marisa keeps bawling about how she can't believe it and how she really loves him, and going on and on. So Jesse and Chris come back, and Jesse asks, "So what are you guys talking about?" Michelle replies, "Oh, we were just discussing how Marisa's your girlfriend." To this Jesse flails and then responds, "Uh, yeah, and I'm telling you now that I'm breaking up with you Michelle. I'm gonna be with Marisa." Michelle calmly finishes her drink, and raises her bottle to smash it over Marisa's head. I grabbed Michelle's hand and wrestled the bottle away so she wouldn't kill the girl. When we got to the party, Chris, Michelle, and I went to the backyard, drank, and smoked more of that damn pot.

friend Larry-Bob and begin grilling him with questions regarding the place I left.

It's Saturday, the busiest day of the week in the retail world.

Generally shoppers enter and exit the shop in waves. Just as the last wave is ebbing, I spot a non-descript, brown-handled shopping bag. Conventional etiquette dictates action, so I raise the forlorn object in the air and bellow, "is this anybody's bag?" The reaction being a collective acknowledgment followed by mechanical head swings from left to right. This not being an uncommon occurrence I deposit the orphaned purchase in the shop's lost and found department. Actually there is no lost and found department per se, but rather some available space between moldy phone books and take-out menus that serves my purpose. However, before passing the bag into its indefinite stay here, I inventory the bag's contents: two pairs of Adidas cotton boxer shorts – one solid black, the other white, size medium and large respectively. "Some stylish huckster has lost himself some underwear!" I state aloud to no one in particular before resuming my professional duties as Super Record Store Clerk.

Mid-afternoon warps into early evening with little fanfare, and before I've had time to digest this fascinating observation, the night shift guy is here to relieve me of my duties. After exchanging pleasantries, I inform him of the presence of the forlorn skivvies. "You know," I offer rather sheepishly, "someone left these here earlier – a couple pair of boxer shorts."

"Oh just leave them here, I'm sure they'll be back for 'em," he replies. This, however, is not the reply which I or rather my conscience was seeking. Something such as, "Dude they're yours now", would've sufficed nicely. My ideals notwithstanding, I pursue a line of reasoning which will provoke a dialogue much more consistent with my plans of leaving work a couple pairs of boxers richer.

"You know, I found them almost four hours ago, don't you think they would've been back by now?" I say with all the manipulative confidence of Perry Mason in a courtroom drama.

Without hesitation my co-worker replies, "Yeah, probably tourists, and even if they'd wanted to find them they wouldn't remember which store they left them in anyway."

"You're probably right," I add.

"Fuck it, keep 'em," he says disinterestedly while throwing a record on the turntable.

'Ground cleared for take-off!,' my criminal and underprivileged inner child announces most gleefully.

At this point a confessional of some sort is in order. In all honesty, upon learning of the found bag's contents I quickly worked out a contingency plan as towards the fate of the boxer shorts in question. My plan was based on some simple mathematical formula. I first tallied the number of objects that had been left in the shop during my history there and divided them by the instances in which people have come back for these forgotten items. My calculations arrived at the following: One camera left last Summer by a German tourist – said item never claimed. By this account I decided boxers would remain in the lost and found until 6:00p.m. at which time they'd be going home with yours truly. In the event that this option should become a reality, I stole a moment during a lull in

business and headed towards the back room. I decided the following: the two pairs the Black boxers, being a large, fit better than the white ones, which happened to be mediums. This I realized to be a minor set back after discovering the receipt in the bottom of the bag which upon further inspection reveled that the origin of purchase was the store across the street. The plan was simple – I merely persuade my co-worker to take the boxers across the street and exchange the medium pair for a large. Events which I won't go into here prevent me from entering this adjacent boutique.

At 6:00 I asked my co-worker to undertake the aforementioned mission and after much pleading and prodding, he reluctantly grabbed the brown-handled bag and crossed the street. Ten minutes later he returned after successfully exchanging the mediums. He then handed me the bag and mumbled something to the affect of owing him something or other. On this note I hastened towards the door to enjoy what was left of my weekend.

Two weeks have elapsed since the events I have just recounted. I'm standing behind the counter trying to look either preoccupied or perturbed enough that prospective customers will think better of bothering me with some inane question or other. Inevitably I'm roused from my state of work denial much sooner than I'd expected. "Yo, hey man," booms the voice of a shirtless soul, who's communication skills account has obviously been closed due to insufficient funds. "Like hey dude listen man I left some Adidas boxers here," he intones in his learned *MTV* drawl. Let me state here that I'm caught entirely off my guard here, I mean weeks have passed since this guy abandoned the boxers in question. However, I don't miss a beat – an unnatural hiccup in any momentum would be an admission of some level of guilt or complicity.

I quickly survey the available space in front of me. "Well, where exactly did you leave them?" I opine.

"Well, I didn't leave 'em here today, it was a couple a weeks ago."

"Yeah, a couple a weeks ago," his side-kick asserts.

As I wind my way through a mock search of the store, I become rather suspect of the legitimacy of this bozo's claim. After all, it's been a couple of weeks; Christ the Statue of Limitations on any conscience nagging has surely come and gone. I smell a rat. My co-worker Don is somewhat of a practical joker. This fact is underscored by the sight of the half dollar that he super glued to the floor near the cash register God knows how long ago. The search continues more now to buy myself some time than to assuage the bozo. Of course Don has put these two yahoos up to this. I must admit this is good. Momentarily I bristle with ideas for some form of retribution for this practical joke when the shirtless one pipes up, "Well, where are they?" As I'm senselessly rummaging amongst some boxes, crouched behind the counter I instantly devise my plan to bring this practical joke to a grinding halt. This plan is inspired by the realization that I'm wearing one pair of the boxers in question. I'll simply stand up, turn around unzip my jeans, pull them down to say my knees, and state in the most dumfounded fashion I can without laughing: "Oh you mean these boxers, hang on let me go take them off. They're a bit crusty, I hope you don't mind." As I get up to turn idea into action, something persuades me that my idea is not a good one. I examine the yahoos. These guys are the real thing. I mean, as far as yahoos are concerned. They are the types who would not look out of place in the pit at a Pantera show. Testosterone jocks with chain wallets, with long hair that they managed to grow years after they spit on the kids who had long hair before it was "cool". And man they're genuinely pissed now, what with the fruitless wait I've put them through. I examine them more closely, yep there is no way old Don, my co-worker, would even *associate* with these guys, good practical joke or not. I offer my apologies in regards to their loss.

However they don't budge. I can see that from their expressions that maybe this isn't over yet, perhaps they small a rat. I begin to think there's something that has transpired in the past couple weeks that I'm not aware of. As their pilot-light eyes burn holes into me from across the counter, I decide to put an end to this charade-it's gone too far. I turn on my heel and crank down the volume knob on the stereo causing an overwhelming sense of interruption among the customers, many of which who had been hitherto enjoying my selection of tunes, "Your attention please, these guys have lost their underwear, has anyone found any underwear that didn't belong to them? If so please bring them up here to the counter." No one moved and a general look of consternation could be viewed in the faces of the surrounding shoppers. I fixed the yahoos with wide eyes and gave a big shrug. After returning the music to its ear-splitting volume level, I watched their crimson red faces make a bee-line for the door. Yep, sometimes embarrassment is the best policy. And sometimes it's the only one.

✦ ✦ ✦

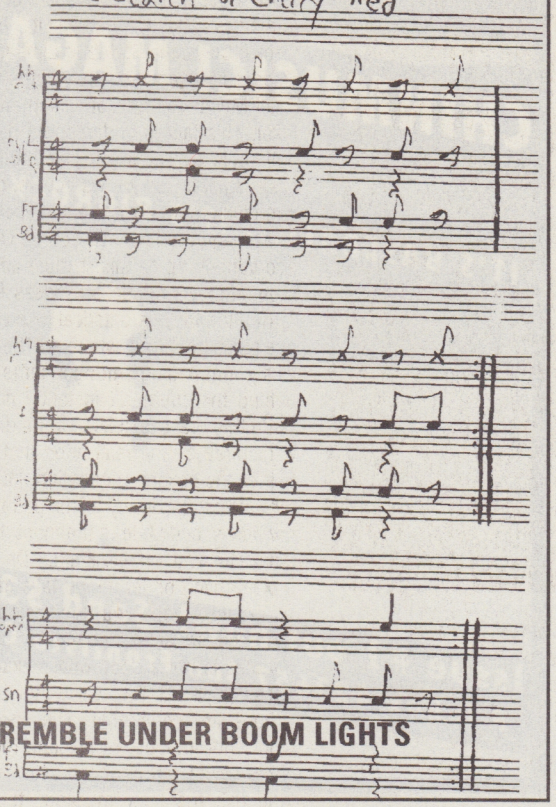
Cliff has been a Ben Is Dead staff writer for far too long. He currently resides in Hollywood and occasionally does freelance work when middle class hang-ups and a guilty conscious gets the best of him.

He tells me that an old leather queen that he used to work with told him that where I was

Jonathan Fire*Eater

The Search for Cherry Red

MATT
VOCALS



TREMBLE UNDER BOOM LIGHTS

Pranks, Art, Sewer Trips,
Guerilla Santas, Klown Attacks
Burning Effigies, Cult Infiltrations,
UFO Hoaxes, Kitsch Adoration,
Urban Games and Secret Rites

WITH THE

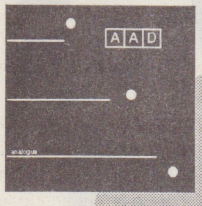
CACOPHONY SOCIETY

FIELD TRIPS TO THE FRINGE

LOS ANGELES
POB 291718
LA, CA 90029
(213) 937-2759

San Francisco
(415) 665-0351
Seattle
(206) 634-3828
Portland
(503)232-3504

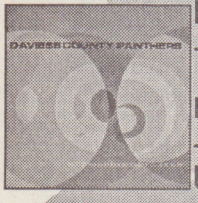
Here's some new favorites to turn your clueless friends (who don't buy records) on to...



analogue - AAD CD

Contextually unique (ie they don't sound like S'Chunk) North Carolina quartet mix Slint, Joy Division and Spaceman 3 into a pleasing ambient dream pop experience (post-rock if you will).

Available really soon, if not now...

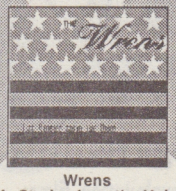


Daviess County Panthers
- Je N'aime Pas Beaucoup Ma Gamelle CD
(recorded in Chicago, you do the math.)

Panel Donor
- Full length CD TBA (recorded by Greg Freeman)

U.S. Maple
- The Wanderer (yes, the classic, really fucked)

Sonic BUBBLEGUM

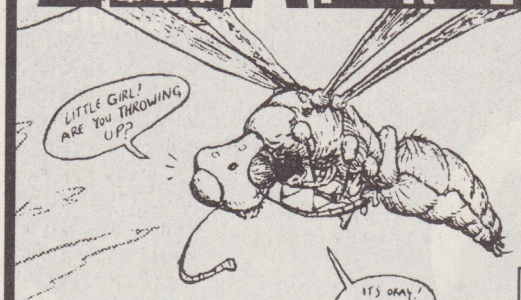


Wrens
Life Stories from the Union
7"

Stuntman
Robert Marshall Long
7"

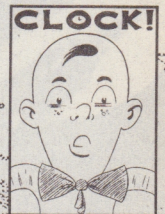
CD's: $12.00ppd • CD EP $10.00ppd • 7" $3.50ppd
To order make check or money order to M.Hibarger
For a Complete Catalog Send SASE to:
P.O. Box 35504, Brighton, MA 02135

ZOO ARSONIST PRESS

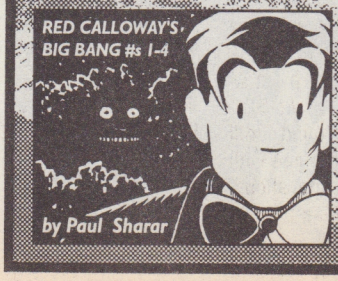


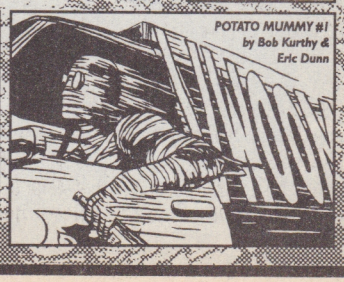
YOUNG BUG #s 1-2
by Michael Kenny

#1 (NEW!)
by Paul Sharar



All comics are $3 post paid, except
Red Calloway's Big Bang #4 ($4, double-sized).
Make checks payable to *Zoo Arsonist Press*.
Send orders or write for a free catalog to:
ZOO ARSONIST PRESS
POB 6322, SAN PEDRO, CA 90734





THE MEDICINE LABEL

TREMBLE UNDER BOOM LIGHTS
ALBUM AVAILABLE IN FINE STORES

STEW
VOCALS

PAUL
GUITAR

TOM
BASS

WALT
ORGAN

The Search for Cherry Red

(1) (Lyrics in code!)

In every car that passes me on the street
I search for that particular face.
The lips, the lipstick tremble under boom lights.
The lipstick cigarette, my only brother's only trace
Burns in the Birthday Ashtray
I've searched all along this way.

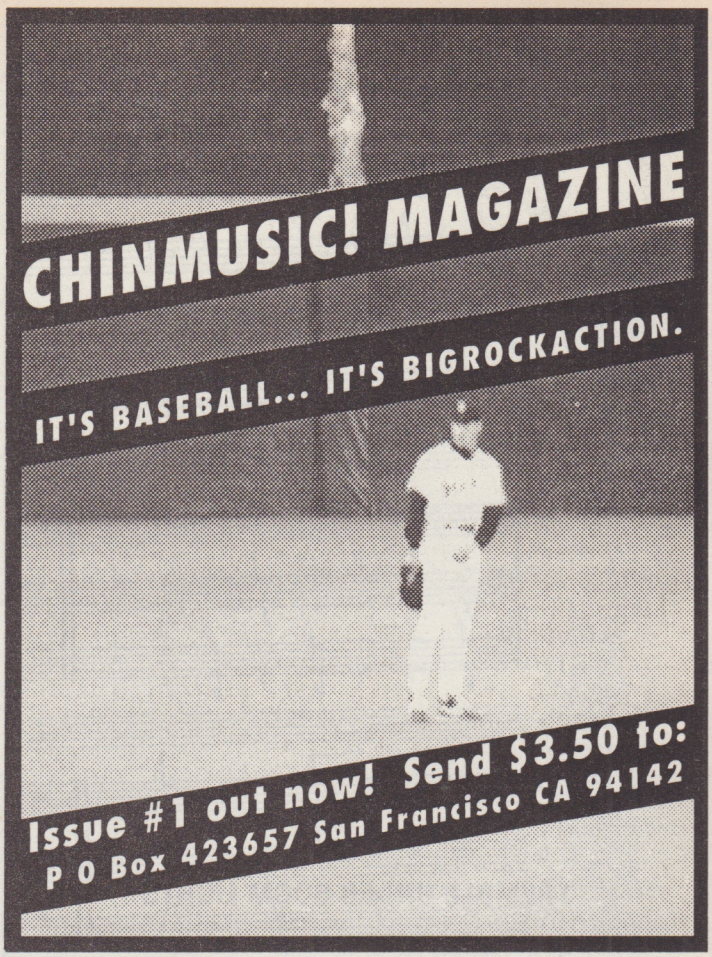
(2)
It was a gift from my little sister
On the very same day they took her away.
It was cut with love, carved by a switchblade
And her mom gave nearly half a decade
And it's painted cherry red, cherry red now
as all your dreams are painted cherry red
inside of your head. It's painted cherry red.

(3)
I still can't remember my brother's face
I see his face on the billboards and the polaroids
that Stayed on my pillow until they faded.

(4)
Look yourself in your Hotel room
I'll take the next flight and be there by no

o Intermission: Dream Sequence o

Jonathan Fire*Eater



the Laughing Man

by Ben Eshbach

Eight years ago I had the good fortune of traveling to England. This trip was financed by an inheritance which my grandmother had left to me. She had always wanted me to go, it being her favorite place, thus I felt it perfectly appropriate to use the money for that leisurely purpose.

I knew some people there. They were friends of the family whom we all knew through my grandmother's acquaintances abroad. They were like relatives to us. They had come to visit us many times (being the more wealthy of the two groups) and had built a strong friendship with everyone. It was their hospitality which gave me a place to stay in their small cottage, (some seven hundred years old), in a small village about one hundred miles southeast of London.

I don't remember the name of the village but I do recall the name of their house; Brownlea on the Green. It was, or perhaps still is, a custom to name your house in those parts. It was a stone house with a thatch roof. It was set just off a white gravel road which wound through the countryside and past hedgerows. The nearest neighbor was a little more than a mighty stone's throw away.

There were no telephone wires dividing the sky into rectangles or traffic lights propped up at the intersections. There were large unfenced fields in which sheep wandered around as though they were unowned. A ten minute walk up the road led to an old church with a graveyard whose tombstones antedated Columbus' voyage toward the Americas. The original stained glass windows had not suffered a single thrown rock in all those centuries; a fact which I, being from Los Angeles, found almost beyond belief.

But directly across the street from Brownlea on the Green was a pub. The name of the pub was The King's Head. Every evening about an hour after supper, my host and I would wander over to The King's Head for a pint or two, or three. We would talk about anything that men talk about at the pub, and the beer would always go straight to my head long before he had even quenched his thirst drinking twice what I did.

One evening after several drinks, my host decided to call it an evening and head across the street for home. I was in the mood to stay a bit and have another drink or two and smoke a few more cigarettes and just absorb the fact that I was thousands of miles from home. He bid me good night and left, waving good-bye to a few friends that were there also.

The pub was not crowded, but there did seem to be more than the usual people there that evening. Perhaps ten others, all men, were drinking and talking and smoking in the room. A couple of men were playing darts, three or four were engaged in some sort of spirited discussion and the rest were just gathered in twos or threes, drinking and occasionally laughing at something or other. Nonetheless, the people there on that night seemed to me to be rather faceless as I was lost in the wonder of being so far from home.

The drink and the unfamiliarity of my surroundings seemed to subtly play upon my senses, giving the impression that I had been there a good deal of the night. I became lost in imaginative speculation and the night seemed to go on forever without being the slightest bit tedious. I don't know how long after my host left that all hell broke loose - it seemed like hours, but it really could not have been more than forty five minutes.

As I had been sitting there thinking, I noticed now and then that the spirited discussion going on at the bar had gradually risen in volume and animation. Had I been paying attention it would not have been too difficult to follow, but as it was I had only caught fragments of the argument:

"Oh now c'mon! You can't be serious!" and "But a minute ago you said you didn't agree with him!" and "That's the last lie in hell!" and "What, may I ask, could your reason be for that one?" and "We'll be damned if those fools have their way with us!" and "Cromwell!? Bloody hell!"

Now when something knocks us out of a daydreaming stupor, generally we are then able to recall what had occurred around us immediately prior to the interruption. But the drink had its effect on me and I was helpless to recall then, or even now, exactly what statement had provoked the laughing man.

What startled me was a very loud laugh. The kind of laugh a man reacts with when he hears something which has been spoken with conviction but which is ironically absurd. Or, as the case might be, the kind of laugh a man responds with when he wants to make the other guy feel as though what he has just said is ironically absurd. One is honest, one is contrived.

Which of the two laughs this man let out, I couldn't tell. It was clear, however, that the man whose statement was the brunt of the hilarity was not laughing, or even smiling. He was just sitting there staring at his laughing rival. He was sitting with his side to the bar. One hand grasped a pint that was sitting on the bar, the other hand placed gently on his leg. He wore a bushy turtleneck and slacks, was clean shaven and had short curly brown hair. He was not tall, but was rather strong looking.

The laughing man stood facing him not more than four feet away. He wore a hat of some sort and a trench coat which came down just below the knees. He was a good foot taller than the sitting man. A mustache and small beard covered a bit of his face. He, too, had a pint on the bar with one hand grasping it.

The sitting man hesitated only a moment, then spoke over the noise.

"Your laughter is false," he said with an unmistakable Scottish accent.

At that statement the laughing man's eyes widened and his laughter seemed to pick up a bit. The sitting man just stared at him with a poker face.

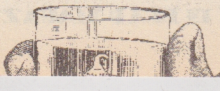
"Now you are laughing for two reasons," he said, "One, to try to make me think that my politics are silly, and two, to try to prove that my assessment of your laughter was incorrect."

The laughing man howled at this one. His laughter became louder and the two men playing darts took notice of the commotion. His laughter must have been painful. At least it must have been hurting his throat. If he kept this up, I thought, he would have a very sore stomach in the morning.

"Now three reasons," continued the sitting man, deadpan.

Sitting there watching this unfold, I may or may not have been influenced by the Scot's assessment (as he put it) of the laughing man; either way, one thing stuck out at me at that moment as obvious as anything could be: the laughter which came pouring out of the standing man did in fact sound as contrived as a whistle. There was, at that moment, no mistaking it in my mind. It was laborious. It was like horrible acting; though in all of its sonic qualities it sounded just like real laughter. There was something in the apprehension of the laughing man's motive that changed its sound altogether. His arrogance nearly sickened me.

The Scot lifted his drink to his mouth and took a casual swallow. Placing his glass back on the bar he spoke calmly with a faint trace of a smile and even fainter sarcasm:



staying has only been operating as a semi-loft space for about five years and that the current

"Surely, were a man to be bluffing, he would not do it in precisely the manner described by the one calling his bluff."

The laughing man continued to roar as if he hadn't heard the Scot, but he had. His eyes showed a little pain as they darted over to me and then the dartsmen and then back to the Scot, without once interrupting his laughter. The pain in his eyes shocked me. His glance had seemed to be a plea for assistance. Assistance with what? Was he looking for an 'out'? Did he want me to laugh with him?

I can't express what an uncomfortable situation this was. In description, one can even charge it to be bland, but to be there was almost intolerable. It was embarrassing and a little frightening. I thought that any moment one might strike the other and, though I stood little chance of being hurt in a brawl, witnessing brute hostility had always left me uneasy for days following.

The laughing man let go of his pint and tipped his hat carelessly and turned for the door with a saunter. But as he approached the door, a very large and ill-proportioned man with short hair that stuck close to his forehead and stopped right above his eyeglasses stood up from a nearby table and casually blocked his exit. If he wanted to stop laughing, he would have to do it for all to see.

The laughing man teetered around as if he hadn't been planning to leave anyway, and sauntered back toward his pint. But now there was a fear in his eyes, which would not have been unusual had it not been for the fact that he was still laughing! Tears welled up in his eyes and he looked at everyone as he groped for his beer. In doing, he knocked it over with the back of his hand and quickly set it upright, rescuing a swallow or two. He pointed at the spilled beer and laughed even more as if to change the subject of his laughter.

"Funny thing, spilled beer," said the Scot.

The few drops left in the bottom of the laughing man's pint were raised to his lips and he tried to drink while he continued convulsively chuckling. This didn't work well, though, and he was forced to swallow wrong. He began to cough, slightly at first and then violently. It rose slowly in him and came out in intermittent bursts. His coughs were mixed with laughing in one enormous display of grotesque noise and grimaces. The sight was ungodly. He even laughed on his inhales between the coughs that tore through his disfigured smile. He coughed for a good half minute before it dawned on me that he was not going to stop - he was choking, and unless he received help he might die then and there.

He could, I thought, just stop laughing now. Whatever his point had been could not be so important to jeopardize his life. Surely no one would think the worse of him for caving in under such circumstances. He seemed mad; and the madder he seemed, the uglier he became.

His eyes were completely wet and his face had slowly discolored itself to a bright, and then deep red. He seemed terrified and determined to keep laughing. While this unfolded not a soul stirred. Everyone sat still and watched with half-interested amusement. It seemed to me that I was the only one present who had even half a mind to help the man. But the apathy in the room, I am ashamed to say, made me embarrassed to help. It seemed that to do so would have been forbidden, honorless or shameful. There was, paradoxically, a strong conviction in me that to help the man would have been cowardly.

The Scot slowly lit a cigarette as the laughing man fell to one knee, then two knees. His hat fell off at his violent fall. He propped himself up with one hand, the other he moved about his throat and chest. The man in the eyeglasses, meanwhile, bolted the door of the pub and turned back around to resume his casual position against the wall.

I couldn't help but think that the bolt had been drawn on my behalf. I was apparently the only outsider. But no one looked my way for even a second.

And now the laughing man was dying. He laid on his side and convulsed for what had to have been two full minutes. His smile had turned into a grotesque, sour pantomime of a smile and his face had become wet from his own spit. His straight black hair was stuck to his face and his ears appeared almost black. The moments between violent inhales became longer and longer until at last there was silence. Instinctively I looked away at the moment he died. The nausea I felt is indescribable.

For the last five minutes my body had been tensed up and rigid and the moment of the man's death made me aware of how painful I had been keeping myself. I tried to slowly relax my body, but found that even the slightest relaxing caused tremors, as though I was freezing cold. Everyone stood still for a second or two. Then the silence was broken by the squeak of the Scot's barstool as he turned back toward his drink. The dartsmen whispered something and turned toward their game. The man in the eyeglasses disappeared through a door behind the bar.

The barkeeper peered over the bar at the dead figure. He made a sour face.

"Goddammit Bobby!"

"Goddamn him. Proud sonofabitch," replied the Scot.

"It don't look good, that's all I'm sayin'. It's…," the barkeeper glanced back through the door behind him. "Steven!"

"I'm on the phone! They're on the way!" the man in eyeglasses hollered.

The barkeeper filled the Scot's glass from a tap.

"You knew what he was like, Bobby. That's all I'm sayin'."

The Scot cracked his neck and took a long swallow.

I don't know what force lifted me from my stupor, for I thought I could have never moved on my own, but the next thing I remember I was drawing back the bolt to the pub door and easing the door open. The men behind me were engaged in sparse talk and seemed unaware of my movement.

My feet on the white gravel outside the pub sounded like gunshots in my quiet escape. I hurried, slow at first and then to a quick trot, away from the pub and north up the road. I didn't want to go directly across the street for fear they might see where I lived.

I don't know exactly who I was afraid of or what I thought those men might want from me, but I somehow felt like I had witnessed a murder of sorts. Perhaps I felt that these men would need to keep me quiet - though in retrospect, I had been just as much an accomplice in the laughing man's death as any one of them had. In their minds I was, perhaps, ill in need of air or even ditching responsibility. Still, not thinking clearly, I hid at the side of the road behind a tall bush about fifty yards up. I waited there until I saw an ambulance pull onto the small grounds around the pub, and then I walked straight down the road to my hosts house, up the driveway and through the porch without being seen.

I never told my host what happened in the King's Head. Though I'm certain he found out about it from a local, he never once asked me why I hadn't told him.

I have, since this event, seen many instances of it to a lesser degree.

• • •

Ben Eshbach is most well known for having ghost-written "My Invisible Hand", a sequel to Adam Smith's "The Wealth of Nations". Other contributions to the arts have included the oil-on-canvas triptych which launched the Ottawan school of Phenomenological Realism, a translation with prologue and notes of the "Ficciones" by Jorge Luis Borges and an award winning analysis of the Irregular Queen's Gambit Declined. In the '90s he had played in the pop band "The Sugarplastic". He currently lives in Nantucket with his wife, Audrey, and two daughters.

owners have never actually spent an entire night there and usually rented the space out for

GET YOUR HANDS OFF MY MODEM, YOU WEASEL!

MORE MUSIC FROM

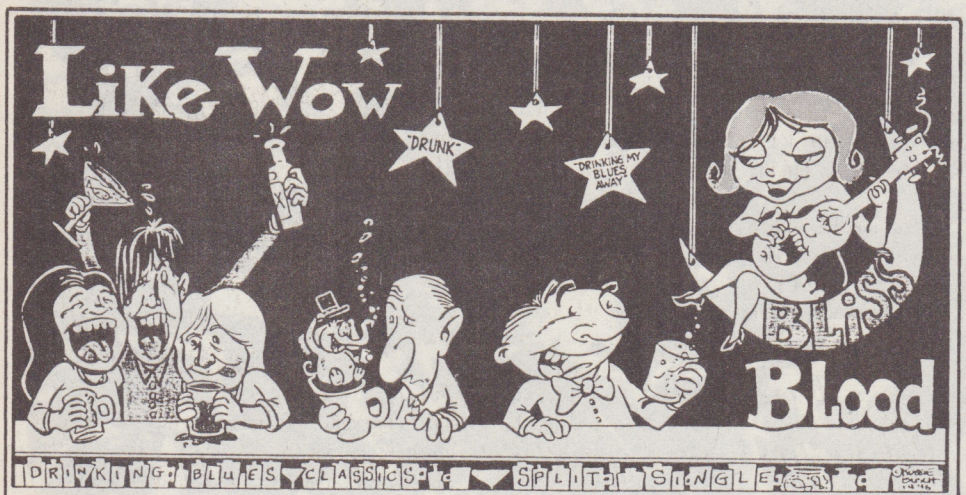
DOTS WILL ECHO

PURE POP FOR NON-PEOPLE

CD $10 POSTAGE PAID

ZERO MUSIC CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 22 GLEN ROCK, NJ 07452



N.Y.C.'s

LIKE WOW

EX-PAIN TEENS SINGER

BLISS BLOOD

CLASSIC DRINKING BLUES SPLIT 7"

LIMITED PRESSING. RED VINYL. COOL RECORD STORES OR $3 ppd.

PSYCHO TEDDY!

151 First Ave. Box 229
N.Y, N.Y. 10003

SIDESHOW PRESENTS... is an assortment of 14 artists from various labels and hometowns whose styles range from lo-fi country to punk rock.

Featured Acts: Punchdrunk (Minneapolis), MensClub (San Francisco), Babyfat (Atlanta), Pee (San Francisco), Douce Gimlet (NYC), Danielle Howle (Columbia, SC), Bayon Forte (Athens, GA), Dame Darcy (NYC), Skulpey (NYC), Halcion (NYC), Earwig (Columbus, OH), Pipe (Chapel Hill, NC), The Clarke Nova (San Francisco), Anodyne (Seattle)

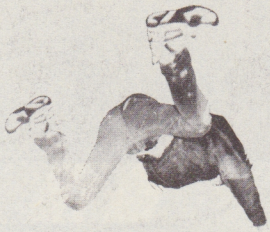
Sideshow Presents: $13ppd

SIDESHOW

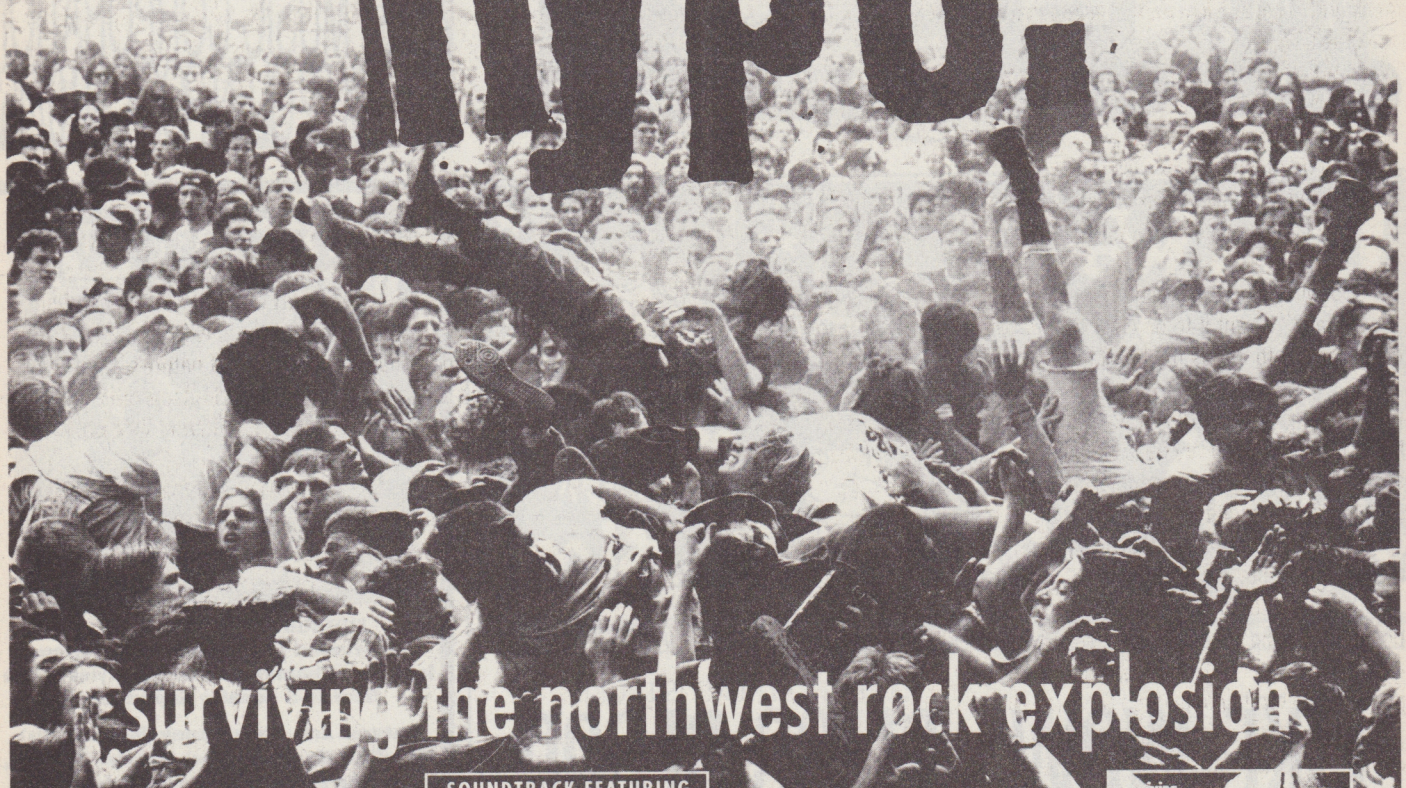
Sideshow Records PO Box 2045
New York, New York 10009
discobowl@aol.com
www.cris.com/~sideshow

"ESSENTIAL VIEWING! AN EXCELLENT, PERHAPS EVEN DEFINITIVE, FILM ON A SUBJECT THAT WAS ONE OF THE GREAT POP-CULTURE HAPPENINGS OF THE LATTER 20th CENTURY."

—WILLIAM ARNOLD, SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER



hype!



surviving the northwest rock explosion

SOUNDTRACK FEATURING

FASTBACKS, WIPERS, U-MEN, GREEN RIVER, SOUNDGARDEN, MUDHONEY, NIRVANA, TAD, SOME VELVET SIDEWALK, DEAD MOON, GIRL TROUBLE, GAS HUFFER, YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS, SUPERSUCKERS, 7 YEAR BITCH, THE GITS, FLOP, POSIES, PEARL JAM, MARK LANEGAN, PIGEONHED

PHOTO BY CHARLES PETERSON

HELVEY/PRAY PRODUCTIONS Presents: A film by DOUG PRAY Produced by STEVEN HELVEY Co-Produced by LISA DUTTON & PETE VOGT Narrative Structure BRIAN LEVY
Edited by DOUG PRAY & JOAN ZAPATA Supervising Editor EARL GHAFFARI Director of Photography ROBERT BENNETT Directed by DOUG PRAY

SUB POP Original motion picture soundtrack on Sub Pop Records www.subpop.com www.hyped.com CFP DISTRIBUTION

White Trash mountain high

by Jessica Hundley

Now it's no secret that the Hundleys are bullshit storytellers not adverse to pulling the willing leg here or there. Take the tale of Grandpa French for instance, head chef on a battleship in the Pacific during the second of the big wars, the boys in uniform clamoring for meat and potatoes. The US FDA has just recently released the infamous Four Food Groups and it just so happens that egg is now officially a meat and bread has become one with the potato. So old French, prankster that he was, dipped some stale bread into whipped egg, grilled it like a steak and – voila! Meat and potatoes wartime style, otherwise known as French Toast!

Now, I believed that story as fact for most of my childhood right up until I mentioned it to Grandma Jean who laughed indignantly and said, "Who fed you that load of crap?". Truth was, I couldn't rightly figure just who had dished it onto my plate, but I had assumed that it was family legend and had been bragging about it on the playground for years. ("Oh yeah, well my Grandfather invented French toast so HA HA !").

So-with this acknowledgment of my genetic predilection toward the tall tales, I want it to be clear that this here story that follows is the gosh darn truth, cross my heart and the whole bit.

It all began one torrid New England afternoon with the summer sun beating its hands on my head, driving me out of the dirt glazed city in search of some natural wonder. I had packed a tent, some chicken legs and beer and headed out to the closest campground to Boston, which just so happened to be in Salem, famous for its burning of witches and its monolithic nuclear power plant.

Upon reaching the gates of the campground I was greeted with the post apocalyptic vision of countless RV's, lined up in what looked like military formation. The twin phallus of the plant loomed just beyond, spewing its acrid smoke into the warm summer air.

Needless to say I turned the wheel abruptly and sped away. After consulting a map, squinting in the growing dusk for the tiny triangle icons, my companion and I headed inland to a nameless town north of the city and far enough west from the radioactive specter of The Crucible Family Campgrounds.

The sun was slowly fading, making it almost impossible to distinguish the particulars of our surroundings. We seemed to be in a dense forest, which was reassuring, and the signs for a state park were a familiar brown and green along the road. Just as the sun had tucked itself in for the night, the ranger station appeared, bright and welcoming and appropriately rustic.

We were greeted by an affable young man in a neat trim uniform who gazed into the car and chirped "sorry folks, full up!" It was at this same moment that the sound of sirens began to tear through the air. An ambulance came barreling out of the campground on two wheels, racing past us and out of the gates. The young ranger, without missing a beat, turned back and said, "Well, it looks like we may just have a space for you folks."

And so they did, thanks to the sacrifices of a pregnant woman and her mild kidney infection. I guess I should have experienced some uneasiness at the sight of an emergency vehicle in a supposedly placid State-owned woods, but at that point I was too tired and too blinded by our good luck to care.

The campground was a maze of man-planned, "natural" roadways, windy and dark and lined on either side by occupied campsites. The place was quite literally packed, a seemingly endless array of kerosene lanterns, bug-lights, beer bottles, picnic tables, fires and fishing poles. It was just the kind of camping I like, a sort of mammoth sleep-over, where you can commune with the great outdoors without feeling threatened by it. The eerie sounds and utter darkness of nature's night time world are tempered by the reassuring din of hundreds of other campers, drinking and laughing, their buglights buzzing with cheerful electrocutions.

We were just beginning to become uneasy about actually locating site 243, when a woman stepped out in front of the car. She was wearing a nylon jogging suit and huge glasses with what appeared to be her initials glued to the lower right hand corner of the lens.

"You kids lookin' for 243?"

We nodded helplessly as Glasses Lady proceeded to direct us, traffic cop style, to a snug little spot beside two tall trees and a stagnant pond.

The nearest campsites were only about a hundred yards away, the closest being the home of our new friend, the second, a sort of family compound. The occupants had obviously been inhabiting the site for some time and had lent it a special charm by their presence. There was a line of laundry strung between the trees, 3 or 4 rusted automobiles, a picnic table with a lantern, stove and battery-operated television and a large stack of hopelessly tangled fishing poles. The entire site was littered with garbage and two large dogs paced the area nervously, barking occasionally and scratching furiously in the dirt.

We unloaded our supplies, scrabbling in the darkness with the tent

photo or movie shoots. When it was a bathhouse in the '70s a serious bottom who frequented

and the cooler. I started a fire with my Girl Scout Secret that I learned at camp, age ten (one large can of lighter fluid, one box of kitchen matches). Settling in, we started the first of our beers, contentedly watching our chicken burn black. It wasn't long before it all started. I do remember the argument at the compound getting loud enough at some point to enter my conscious mind, but looking back I think it may have been going on for some time before I became fully aware of it.

It had become apparent that our neighbors were having a bit of a tiff. The two adults of the group were standing facing each other, shouting obscenities that floated over to us on the cool night air. The man, whose name was apparently "Del" (for Delbert), had his back to us and the dark crack of his ass peeked over the rim of his pants. It seemed to be grinning. The woman we could see clearly: pair of gigantic glasses and a nylon sheen glimmering in the dark. I never was quite sure what the argument was about, but it was obvious that the two of them were half in the bag and that things had taken on that sort of stage-lit drama glow a-few-too-many can lend to a situation. (fix sentence)

Two teenage girls were standing on the sidelines shouting swears like cheerleaders at home-coming. Two small boys stood beside them, staring in awed wonder. Delbert, it seemed, had worked himself up to a mad frenzy and was beginning to throw every item in the campsite, one by one, into the fire. He appeared to be working with intense concentration, methodically feeding the growing pyre with lawn chairs, tents, fishing poles, sleeping bags, clothes, food and finally, climactically, the picnic table. By this time the fire had reached impressive proportions, greedily eating up the family's belongings in a 20-foot tower of flame.

A crowd of gawkers had gathered, and there was a hushed ooh and ah as people stared in mute disbelief. Occasionally someone would shout out expletives or words of encouragement. The argument finally reached it's shrieking, weeping, climax as Del climbed into the nearest car and with a dismissive wave of his hand promptly ran it head-on into a tree. He was just stumbling out of the crushed automobile when the first of the police jeeps arrived. The officer in charge stopped in front of the picnic table where we were calmly surveying the scene and asked where the trouble was. I politely pointed out the inferno a few yards away and they raced onward to save the day.

I must say Del didn't put up much of a fight, he seemed to have vented all the rage he had in him by scorching the landscape. He allowed himself to be tackled and cuffed without so much as a peep. The woman was at this point hysterically screaming, "you fucker, you fucker!". When asked who exactly dear Delbert was, she shouted, "My fiancee… my EX fiancee!!" in her best listen-to-me-high-school-drama-club wail. Delbert sat slouched and impassive in the back seat of the cruiser, lazily mumbling threats.

After awhile, things became quiet again, the crowd drifted away to their marshmallows and sleeping bags. But the episode had not ended for Del and his lady friend. It seemed that the woman was required to come down to the station with the police in order to press the charges. She seemed to be growing more and more agitated and anxious. After much dickering she shouted, "But who will take care of the children?!" her drama voice in full force now, star of the show.

Well, we knew what we had to do. So clutching our beer bottles and covered in soot from our attempts with the chicken legs, we stepped out of the darkness and offered our services.

Now it's not that I don't have a face you can trust, it's just that we may have looked a bit bedraggled, a bit, shall we say, questionable; perhaps not the sort you would choose to supervise your children in the deep dark forest. But beggars cannot, as they say be choosers, and anyway the woman didn't seem in the least nervous at the prospect. She agreed cheerfully and promptly took off for the station, leaving us to do what we pleased.

This is perhaps the point where I should describe in more detail the surviving members of the compound. The two teenage girls were "best friends", a blonde and a brunette with perfect towering hair complete with frontal claws (which is what I like to call those strange, wave-like hairspray-glued bangs, which rise from the forehead in a vaguely threatening way and are usually accompanied by a very high, very tight pony-tail). The blonde was the daughter of the woman who had just left, but of no relation to the man. The eight year old boy was the cousin of the best friend and had joined the camping excursion unprepared for the chaos that was to ensue. He told me his parents made goat cheese in Vermont, and I imagined them as sweet hippies who had sent their son to visit Auntie Lisa with no idea that he would be witnessing a pyromaniac in action. He seemed to be completely enamored of the situation and of his position as untouchable observer. He repeatedly stated, "These people are crazy!" with a mixture of awe and bewilderment.

The youngest and final member of the entourage was a tiny underweight 3 year old with a thick crust of day-old boogers stuck fast to his upper lip.. He was apparently the spawn of the evening's combatants. Almost immediately upon his mother's departure he came over and tugged at my sleeve.

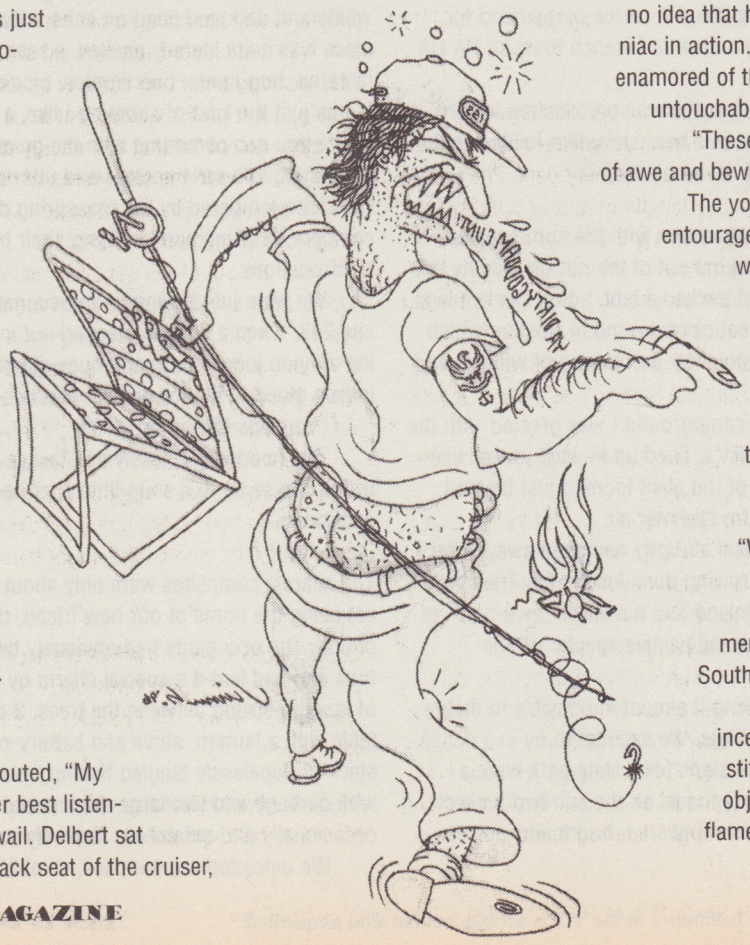
"Guess what?"

I leaned down,

"What?"

"My dad threw my tent in the fireah!" (Please note: this statement should be read with a VERY thick South Boston accent.)

He voiced this sentiment almost incessantly throughout the night, substituting "tent" for various other objects his father had tossed into the flames.



We learned from the blonde that old Delbert was an ex-Green Beret and that he could kill someone with one punch. He was, according to her, "A fuckin' baahstaahd" and had apparently burned the family's belongings on several other occasions, but only when he got into the "Haahrd Lica". Despite this tendency, Del wasn't as bad as her "Reahl faahtha". She then proceeded to demonstrate, with standard pro-wrestling posturing, how once she had hit him (her real fatha) ovah the back of the fuckin' head and dropped him ovah her fuckin' knee."

After completing this energetic performance, Blondie and Best Friend retired to the back seat of one of the rusted cars, smoking like chimneys and whispering excitedly. They were just at that age where everything is sensuous and heightened and I'm sure the situation had caused a bonding I could never comprehend.

We were left on our own to entertain the younger kids while attempting to avoid the two menacing dogs who were now straining on their chains and frothing at the mouth with excitement. Due to the fact that, obviously, the tents and sleeping bags had been disposed of, I tried to make a sort of substitute shelter in the back of a pickup truck, putting down old clothes and salvaging partially burnt blankets. I was intent on getting the kids to sleep and calming the youngest, who was endlessly repeating his "Guess What?" question like some sort of hysterical mantra.

Occasionally a green ranger truck would roll out of the darkness and a cloud of marijuana smoke would filter through the air. This was our nameless, bad-ass guardian angel with a voice like Lou Rawls and the equilibrium of a Zen master. He would appear at intervals, shaking his head in bemused commiseration and calming smoking a cigarette. The first time he left I could hear the girls' giggled approval. "Holy shit, thaht dude is fuckin staahond".

According to Ranger Rawls it had been a busy day at the campgrounds. Some thefts, a few illicit firework displays, a broken nose from a fist fight down by the lake, and one camper ejected for threatening his girlfriend with a Swiss army knife.

It was an almost impossible task to get the younger kids to sleep. To Vermont Boy, the experience had given him an adrenaline rush equivalent to a night at the circus or a day at the amusement park. The three-year-old seemed scarred for life. In my attempts to find bedding I came across a old and ragged American flag which the older boy grabbed and wrapped around his shoulders for warmth. Almost immediately I could smell the Newport tinged breath of Blondie who had leapt out of the car upon witnessing this desecration of our country's national symbol.

After staring for a few seconds in appalled silence she launched into an incredibly impassioned speech extolling the requirements and respect due this illustrious historical icon.

"...you nevah let it touch the ground...it always flies higha than all the othah flags."

It made my heart sing with pride, let me tell you. It seemed that the girls, having warmed up to us a little and feeling the center of attentions, were now ready to divulge their life stories and innermost secrets. They went into a long diatribe on the social system of their school and a girl they knew who was, "a fuckin whoraah."

At some point the ranger returned, slipping from out of the darkness and positioning himself impassively against the trunk of a tree. He had arrived just in time to hear the climax of the slut story.

"Lets just say, she likes to be on her fuckin' knees!" (Please note: All Blondie and Best Friend comments are to be spoken through a cloud of menthol cigarette smoke exhaled through clenched teeth.)

There was a heavy awkward silence then the Ranger offered his own velvet-voiced wisdom: "Well, dogs sleep on their feet."

I thought this was some sort of old proverb and for a long time pondered over it's meaning. I knew of course, that it was untrue, that I had never, in fact, seen a dog asleep on its feet, horses maybe, but not dogs. It wasn't until sometime later that I learned from my companion that he had actually said "Dog's asleep on my feet", and promptly kicked one of the campsite's ragged mutts off of his shiny black shoes.

I would like to make clear, at this point, that time was slowly creeping by and literally hours had elapsed since mom's departure to book Del. The girls, giggling and chain-smoking, were now expounding on the purgatory of the campsite and the lameness of the natural world in general. "I wish there was like wall-to-wall fuckin caahpeting all ovah the fuckkin' ground." My first reaction was disdain, but I relented after remembering one of my own adolescent diary entries. "I don't know why we have to go to Arcadia National Park, I'd much rather go to the mall."

As time ticked by, the situation became in increments less amusing and more bizarre. Lit by the sharp white light of a high powered lantern, the campsite resembled a small local dump. It was littered with battered cans, bits of tinfoil, soggy Jiffy-Pop pans, broken toys and soiled copies of Young Miss. It had obviously attained this sorry state long before the infamous eruption and I was beginning to think maybe old Del had had the right idea. It was at least four in the morning and I was feeling sorry for myself. For myself, for Delbert drunk and sick in his cell, for his fiance...his EX fiancee, for the kid with the burnt fishing pole whose "guess what?" was the only sound in a silence that had swallowed us whole.

Ranger Rawls had retired to his groovy luv pad cabin and the night was slowly, surely becoming more blue than black. Things were quiet and sad. A pile of charred remains sat smoking in the middle of the campsite, mocking me. I had come over, despite some voyeuristic intentions, to help, but it hadn't worked out at all. No one was soothed and no one had slept except for that one mangy dog on the ranger's foot. And here I was, standing in the slow creep of dawn: tired and dirty and ineffectual. I was just beginning to sway a little with exhaustion, when the woman, after an eternity, returned.

She got out of the car and immediately hugged Blondie and Best Friend, after a while including Vermont Boy and the youngest in the huddle. No one was crying, they were just holding each other, silent. My friend and I stood outside the circle and shifted uncomfortably. When the woman finally looked at us there was something in her eyes like resentment tinged with humiliation. It was time to go.

No one thanked us. There were only some mumbled goodnights and the woman nodding goodbye with a dismissive shake of her head. And just like that, in the blue gray dawn, we walked into the woods and out of their lives.

✦ ✦ ✦

Jessica Hudley is Ass. Ed of Mommy and I Are One, *straight outta Boston, and wrote one of Darby's all-time favorite articles, "My Pets Died", in the Death issue of Ben.*

Artist Jim Blanchard produces his own comic, Bad Meat, *is the fabulous inking genious for* Hate, *and still has Nagel nightmares.*

the establishment every week for marathon pork sessions was found in his private room with a

I swear I will never tell another living soul

A TRUE CONFESSION
by Leonard Kroenk

[photo by Sugar Levine]

Alice is pretty much my best friend, and I've known her for about 12 years. People who know us usually end up asking (or at least wondering) if anything ever...happened between us. My usual response is, "No, not really." I generally don't go into the "not really" part. But...

It was Saturday afternoon. Alice and I had gone to a barbecue which was rained out and ended up with a lot of very drunk people packed into a living room too small to hold them all. A band had started playing, and it was bad in the way only your friends' bands are bad. Alice and I were bored, and before long we left.

"Hey Alice," I asked her as we headed across town.

"Yeah?"

"I overheard this really repulsive story on the bus yesterday."

"Is it interesting? or just repulsive?"

"Well... this gal was saying how some other lady had given a guy a handjob for fifty bucks in food stamps."

"And?"

"That's it."

"These were friends of yours?"

"No, just people I heard on the bus. I have no idea who they were."

"Hmm. That doesn't seem that bad. I mean – you don't know the circumstances or anything."

"Yeah, I guess so. It does seem a little messed up, though."

"I don't know," replied Alice. "It seems like a fairly reasonable exchange. Each of them had something the other one wanted."

"I bet you're just saying that."

"No. I mean it. I mean, it wasn't like she had to fuck the guy or anything."

"So, would *you* give someone a handjob for $50 in food stamps?"

"I don't know. It would depend."

"Depend on what?" I asked.

"Well... I suppose it would depend on the guy. If I was broke enough, I probably would."

"But you're *never* broke. You panic if you don't have next month's rent in the bank."

"That's not the point. I mean – if a guy felt a girl up for money, it wouldn't be weird."

"Well, it would still be a little weird, but I see what you're saying."

"Okay, Leonard. Would you think it was sleazy if a girl slept with a guy after she went out with him for dinner and a movie?"

"Uhh. I guess not too sleazy."

"So how is this any different?"

"Well, presumably, if people go out and then sleep together, they at least like each other..."

"Well, maybe this girl liked the guy with the food stamps. Maybe not enough to sleep with him, but enough to give him a handjob."

"So – would you give a handjob to a guy you just sort of liked if he took you out to dinner and a movie?"

Alice thought for a few seconds. "Well, it would depend on the guy. And, of course, on where we went for dinner and what movie we saw."

I rattled off a variety of guys, restaurants, and films, trying to see which combination was handjob worthy. Being the kind of person I am, it wasn't long before I brought up the inevitable question. "So... would you give *me* a handjob in exchange for dinner and a movie?"

Alice looked at me with an amused expression. "You had to ask that, didn't you?"

"Okay, I'm sorry I asked."

"No. I'm quite used to that sort of thing from you. I've almost come to expect it."

"Thank you. But admit it: you were perfectly willing in *theory* to give someone a handjob for dinner and a movie, but when the reality presented itself, it was a different story."

Alice rolled her eyes. "No. I just don't want to give you the satisfaction of hearing me say something stupid like that."

"So I take it your answer is no."

"I didn't say that. Besides, you didn't say what movie, or where we'd go for dinner."

"Okay, for a dinner and a movie, both of your choice, would you give me a handjob?"

"Yeah. Sure.... But I'd have to wear a glove or something. And you couldn't tell anyone."

She left it at that. Somehow the subject of conversation changed, and we eventually arrived at my house.

"So, Alice, what do you want to do with the rest of the afternoon?"

"I thought you were gonna take me out to dinner and the movies."

"Sure, but no backing out of your part of the deal."

"Oh, I'll give you a handjob, but you won't enjoy it. Wait a minute; you don't have any gloves."

"As a matter of fact, I do. I got some to dye my hair with, and I haven't used them yet."

"Well, you'll have to wear a rubber, too. I've seen some of the people you've slept with."

In turn, we each added conditions to this agreement, until it sounded like a 19th century European peace treaty. It became evident, however, that neither of us was going to back down.

Suffice it to say that we managed to complete the act.

It was, without a doubt, the least erotic sexual experience I have ever had.

"Leonard," said Alice, "I need you to give me your word that you will NEVER tell anyone what just happened."

"Believe me, I'm in no hurry for anyone to know about this.... do you mind if I take a quick shower?"

"Go ahead."

When I emerged from the shower, Alice was reading the paper. "Hey! *Hairspray* is playing tonight," she said.

It was the latest John Waters film, and we were both eager to see it. The next show was in 45 minutes, so we ended up skipping dinner. Instead we heated up some leftover lasagna from the fridge.

"This isn't the best dinner I could imagine, Leonard."

"Well, that wasn't the best handjob either..."

(Actually, looking back on the incident, I remember that I promised to take Alice out to dinner at some later date. I don't think I ever delivered on that promise, so I suppose I still owe her a dinner.)

We finished our lasagna and headed for the cinema.

I hope this won't cause any sort of... *problem* between us," said Alice.

"I don't think so. How about you? Are you all right with everything?

"Oh – I'm fine. A bit appalled perhaps."

"Well, there doesn't seem to be that awkward silence or emotional dark cloud that so often follows your typical regrettable sexual encounter."

"Well, we didn't exactly have sex."

"Not what *you* would call sex, at least."

"Leonard, I don't think very many sane people would call *that* sex!"

"If anything, it was more of a gross-out contest."

"In which case, who won?"

After some discussion and debate over whose pride had been more injured, we realized it was a draw. Alice and I both have the bad habit of being willing to sink to any depth if we can drag someone down with us. While this can be amusing when aimed at other, more easily embarrassed people, it can be problematic when we try it on each other.

At the theater we, of course, ran into someone we knew. It was a guy who used to be a neighbor of Alice's, and we managed to have the usual casual-acquaintance type conversation with him without bursting out giggling.

The movie was okay. *Hairspray* was the first of John Waters' "nice" films, and Alice remarked on how odd it was to be watching a John Waters film and to not have anything on the screen be anywhere near as offensive as what she had just done.

Thankfully, this incident didn't hurt our friendship – it may even have made it stronger. True to my word, I didn't tell a soul about what had happened between us. It wan't until several months later that I realized that *Alice had told everyone.* When I complained, she reminded me that I had promised not to tell a soul, but she had never agreed to anything.

Leonard Kroenk looks like Raymond by all accounts.

butcher knife up his asstrovar. According to urban legend,

Archers of Loaf
All The Nations Airports

Wickedly aggressive yet delicately crafted, the Archers third full length is nothing less than a musical masterpiece.

A 100 LP • Out Now

Blithe
Head Is Mighty

Unconventional debut from this Swedish foursome that will change the way salmon spawn.

A104 CD • Out Now

Chug
Sassafras

New ROCK from New Zealand. Discordant harmonies, nostalgic pop and a driving groove. Just what you've been looking for.

A112 CD • Out Now

knapsack
Day Three of My New Life

Their sophomore release retains its atypical riffs, swirling energy and love of dynamics while exploring darker territory. A whole new recipe for sonic chaos.

A095 CD/LP • Out February 25

Trunk Federation
The Infamous Hamburger Transfer

Explosive, hard AND melodic, TrunkFederation's debut will make you believe there is RAWK on other planets.

A111 CD/LP • Out February 11

The Loud Family
Interbabe Concern

Third full length from ex Game Theory frontman Scott Miller. Will keep adventerous listeners coming back for more.

A098 CD • Out Now

Paul K. and The Weathermen
L♥ve Is A Gas

A highly literate lyrical style rife with nods to pulp fiction writers like Jim Thompson, PAUL K is one of our dark yet great Americana songwriting resources.

A109 CD/LP • Out January 21

CD $12 • LP $8 • CS $7 • 7" $3 (all postpaid)
visa/mastercard/information/catalogue/mailing list call: 1-800-ON-ALIAS
check/moneyorder/catalogue/mailing list write to:
Alias Records, 2815 W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91505
or e-mail us at alias@directnet.com • http://www.aliasrecords.com

alias

adios je t'aime

by nina dentata

It's a night like any other night in Los Angeles: someone getting shot, someone getting bought, and everyone imperceptibly continuing to rot. Unremarkable except for the fact that there will be no other night exactly like it. But, if you think about it, that's always the case.

Tonight, Elle is going to meet a friend for a drink at Windows, the revolving restaurant/bar on the top floor of the Hollywood Holiday Inn. With its in-house top-40 cover quartet, champagne buckets, and tuxedoed maitre d',calling the place kitsch would imply a gloss of irony that it utterly forsakes. Its atmosphere takes a stab at class, brutally misses and barely strikes a pretension of swank. But, as if they really believe it's the thought that counts, none of its patrons seem to notice. Replete with an array of clueless Mid-Western tourists and Middle-Eastern businessmen, local wanna-bes and transplanted has-beens, pre-consummated couples and post-partum banktellers on a girls' night-out, Windows reeks of unfulfilled sentimental expectations that only heighten with each whirling panoramic view of the cityscape 23 floors below, and multiply with each greasy buffalo wing scavenged at its free buffet. I'm sure that if every sap in the place wasn't dying to hold up and partake of the illusion it only halfheartedly offers, its concealed depravity would come bursting through and sparkle throughout the spinning lounge like the disco ball over the dance floor illuminating the black holes of inanity lurking behind our own weak pretenses. And that's exactly why Elle likes it there.

Waiting for that sweet moment of revelation yet knowing full well it will never occur, she's lured to the place, like a moth repeatedly hurling its winged body against a glass-encased flame, battering itself for an emblazoned end forever out of reach. In other words, Elle is stupid. Granted she should stop subjecting herself to this mawkish scene, stop refusing to accept its reality. But as an optimist with extremely poor judgement, the wisdom of self-preservation is lost on her. Elle keeps coming back to Windows, stupidity intact. And, for a night like tonight, it is the perfect setting to meet a friend. Especially this one. Especially since she never wants to see him again.

Actually, this friend is not really a friend, he is more of a circumstantial acquaintance. The initial circumstance: an unfortunate death and an unfortunate night of drunken commiseration. The resultant acquaintance: a serial one-night-stand spanning two years. Their involvement has consisted of very infrequent, relatively anonymous sex coupled with the desire to never repeat it, regulated by fluctuating levels of mutual boredom. No maintenance, no commitment: a fool-proof equation for light amusement. Unless you factor in the exponential degree of Elle's foolishness.

For one thing, the sex was far from memorable. In fact, she can't recall if they ever did actually have sex. Maybe it's because she usually found herself severely sleep-deprived, chemically-altered or in an otherwise attention deficient state when consenting to interact with this person. But even then, the sex-like activity she does recall was way too sporadic and hurried to scratch beyond whatever initial itch there may have been. Literally and metaphorically, it amounted to little more than masturbation – an empty offering at the altar of their own banality. The fact it happened more than once, let alone repeatedly, is a testament as much to the force of habit as the inadequacy of linear logic – "it just had to get better since it couldn't get any worse."

One would hope that at least its follow-up – the desire to never repeat the mistake – could be somewhat more gratifying, morally or otherwise. However, if Elle had been paying attention she would have realized immediately that simply desiring something is a lot different than actually getting it, or in this case, not getting it. But she rarely pays attention.

In fact, after the initial unfortunate mishap of waking up no where near the wrong side of her bed, the unrestrained impulse to run for her life seemed to nullify the desire to never re-live the scenario. Yet days later, after finally exchanging apologies and absolving each other of their mutual misconduct – they were, after all, supposedly seeing other people – the acquaintance proposed a reenactment of the crime. She guessed he meant just the sex, unaware that the only thing which made it novel was the guilt and loathing. Before she could figure out who was more insane, it soon became clear that the acquaintance wasn't going to go away by her merely wishing him elsewhere. This meant that not only did she have to desire not to see him, she had to resolve not to see him.

Now resolving not to see someone is a whole other animal. For one, it necessitates actually thinking about them. That alone involved way more energy than she cared to expend. If Elle had wanted to think about someone when their dick wasn't in her mouth, or even for that matter when their dick was in her mouth, she'd have sold herself into wedlock long ago.

On top of the thinking, resolutions require that you act accordingly to get your point across. Their interaction was so sporadic and spontaneous that it was more than difficult to maintain continuity. It meant that even if Elle got a call from him in the middle of the night and in her cozy, warm, half-dream state thought it was slightly comical that this acquaintance was such an ill-mannered asshole, she'd have to try to act indignant. Or if she was sustaining a high from hanging in the ocean all day with slippery dolphin, she had to act uncomfortable if she bumped into him. This was a hassle. No matter how you look at it, having to do anything besides spread your legs for sex you weren't even going to remember is having to do too much.

Suffice it to say, a situation Elle felt close to nothing about very soon became a situation she felt close to something about: she got annoyed. The catch was just the thought of having to make any effort to rid herself of this annoyance annoyed her even more. So, she just ignored it.

That was a mistake, one which she might have learned from if she was the learning type. It was in the category of mistakes made when you are too lazy, tired or preoccupied to clean-up something after it is used, say for instance, a jar of honey. When you come home later on, not only is that jar of honey covered with ants, but from then on there are ants sporadically invading your kitchen when you least expect it, colonies of ants which you have to try harder and harder to get rid of. The whole ordeal could have all been prevented had you put a little effort into cleaning it up in the first place.

Likewise, attempting to get rid of this acquaintance became a sticky mess that required escalating efforts of sanitization. The "let's just be friends' approach was just too friendly. Even Elle had to laugh

after that incident many customers reported experiencing unsettling events in their individual

at the thought of being friends with someone she had no interest in, let alone respect or trust. She could barely keep a straight face telling him with mock-admonition "it will be better this way," as she pulled his hands out of her underwear. The avoidance technique – never returning any phone calls for three month stretches at a time – was a waste of time. Most people would be polite enough to just disappear. But, just when she thought he was gone forever, he'd resurface with the same old lines. Even flatly hanging up on him had no effect. Actually, he seemed to like it. In fact, he seemed to like the fact that he annoyed her, that he could annoy her. It seemed to bolster his damaged ego somehow. No doubt the truth wasn't going to work on him, but she tried it as an exercise in the obvious – "Go away, you annoy me." Big surprise, that wore off too.

It was a good thing for her that it didn't take a genius to figure out that the best way to get rid of him for good would be to change tack completely. Considering whenever she pushed he pulled in the opposite direction with the same relative force or lack there of, she knew what she had to do to end this tug-of-war-of-predictability.

So that is why, tonight, at Windows, Elle plans to tell this circumstantial acquaintance that she loves him. Deeply and eternally.

Having found a space on Hollywood Blvd., she parks her car, gets out and locks it. From what she can make out of the melee of parking signs, she has 47 minutes before violating some municipal clock. Should be long enough. Besides, risking the danger of getting towed might add just the challenge she needs to fight off her escalating boredom and go through with this.

As Elle walks toward the hotel looming against the Hollywood Hills, she feels rather dauntless, pumped by a surge of confidence that in the face of years of defeat she will finally succeed in cleaning the acquaintance out of her life. Unlike you who may have your doubts, she knows that she has been subtly priming him to fall for this line from the very beginning. In fact there is no doubt in her mind that he is convinced of her undying affection already.

You see, after the first infamous night when she left the honey out, Elle had felt bad for running out in horror, guilty about the circumstances and had sincerely wanted to apologize. No hard feelings, you know the score. But before she could say anything, her acquaintance caught her off guard by saying that he was worried she was falling for him. To top it off, he boldly elaborated that he wanted to have sex more often, but didn't want to a relationship since he just knew she would smother him. Elle hadn't expected much from him, but she definitely hadn't expected that.

Now, Elle would have a tremendously hard time convincing anyone who even remotely knows her that she was capable of love, let alone that she could smother someone with it. I'm not even sure if she knew what that meant, but, no doubt, she felt a tinge of reluctance to let the chance of finding out slip by. Hence her ambivalence for ending it with a polite "fuck you." Instead, she ventured something like, "How did you know? You are so sensitive!" To her amazement and budgeoning delight, he bought it. As a lark, she decided that she would feign way more interest in him than was even minutely realistic both to amuse herself and to keep him, fearful of the inevitable smothering, at a safe distance.

Consequently, even when Elle had been avoiding his calls for months, if she ran into him unexpectedly she would say something completely ridiculous like, "Why don't you ever call me, you're so mean!" Especially if there were witnesses around, like his roommates. Or she would offhandedly throw out something absurd like "You are so inspiring, not many people in LA write screenplays." She had never even read anything he wrote, but that didn't stop her. The objective was to make the acquaintance believe she thought he had some unique talent that made her like him in some quantity unknowable, perhaps, unthinkable. It was so little of a challenge to convince him of this in the face of blatant actions to the contrary that she would raise the stakes and blurt out, "You realize that I'm only nice to you because it amuses me, don't you?" But he refused to accept that her previous pretenses were a deliberate act of auto-amusement. It was fascinating, if not endearing, the way he clung on to the belief that she wanted him to be her boyfriend. If she was the type to feel pity for the mentally challenged, it would have been almost sad.

But the truth is Elle did start to like the role of the lovesick fool, the hapless victim of an unrequited love. The innocent. That she really didn't like him became a minor detail she glossed over. She preferred to see it as a plus enabling her to throw herself into the fantasy without the possibility of any lasting consequences.

And, when she was in the mood, she threw herself. How handy it was to be madly in love with the acquaintance when searching for a plausible reason to bail out of a situtation before it got too serious. She even tried to convince her friends – "I'm hopelessly in love" – but expecting them to indulge her fantasy should have clued her in that she was losing perspective. Instead she just tried it out on friends living out of the country who knew her insanities but were more pliable because they didn't have to live with it everyday. Afterall, that Elle had absolutely nothing tangible to gain from the acquaintance – no intense sex for days on end, no intellectual stimulation, no travel to faraway places, no rent checks or major appliances, no career opportunities, not even a shoulder to cry on – did seem to support the idea that she was just blindly in love. Of course those same reasons made the fantasy all the more perversely appealing to her as well. To love an ignoramus for no reason whatsoever – how exquisitely romantic, how decadently noble – she swooned.

But, there was a bit of a problem. Even though she was eager to plunge into the depths of some Sadian degradation, caked in bodily secretions, groveling for every inch of his love, prostrate at the altar of his divine body, the acquaintance's mind, nourished on a regular diet of pot and Playboy, had too few active brain cells to catch on. It was senseless to clue him in since the very basis of their interaction and in turn her fantasy was that he withhold anything she claimed to want from him. So, Elle was stuck with subtly encouraging him to be an asshole by indulging his requests which verged on the insipid. But eventually, there was just no way to sustain interest when asked for the hundredth time, "So, what color underwear do you have on?"

The bottom line is the fantasy just didn't work when she had to actually interact with him. The less Elle saw, thought or heard of her acquaintance, the more the concept-idea he represented to her

rooms. With the advent of AIDS and the closure of all the baths in the city; this one was

worked. Which is why she was really avoiding him. Not that I was lying when I told you that Elle avoided him because he annoyed her. He did, as did most people. But it had nothing to do with that. In fact, the whole thing had nothing to do with him at all. Actually, although she had eroticized his entire being, she barely even knew him.

The only reason they got to know each other beyond an initial "hello" is that she happened to be seeing his close relative who lives out of town when they first met. Actually she had been involved for a few months with the relative a long time ago and had started seeing him again, sort of on the side, against her better judgement. It was very minimal and I'm not saying that to make her look better. Now the relative, whom she knows very well, perhaps too well, knows her, perhaps not as well, but well enough. That is why she couldn't understand why he would have done something as silly as make a request that she didn't fuck this soon-to-be acquaintance, just out of the blue. The whole thing really was the relative's fault because it hadn't even occurred to her. I'm sure that she hadn't even noticed the acquaintance before the relative pointed out his forbidden charm.

In fact, Elle half-thinks it was all a set-up. I have to agree that would have been delightfully clever. There she was trying to delicately explain to the relative why even years after they broke up she was still so wrong for him, why she could never blow her life up in his pending nuclear family, all the while he was scheming a way to guilt her into fucking him. Of course, if she had fucked someone he asked her not to, she would be too guilty to refuse him whenever he was in town. If that was his intention, it worked beautifully, depending of course on your concept of beauty.

But even if that wasn't the relative's intention, there was still something attractive about the rewards of violating his prohibition. To Elle's impaired eye-sight, it appeared as an inticing win-win situation. She got to give the relative a good reason to not like her so much anymore. She got to give the acquaintance a much needed opportunity to sharpen his literary skills by playing the Bukowski-esque dog. And, she got to feel giving, even somewhat self-sacrificing, if not down-right altruistic.

Besides, some things are just meant to be, beyond one's control, and it really did seem to have been a match made in heaven. Just insinuating she liked the acquaintance no matter how infrequent or inaccurate, scared him as much as it scared her. Elle would never think of even letting down her guard in a situation where any real feelings were involved. It was a karmic relief for her to not have to be the one dutifully patrolling the labryrinthian boundaries between sex and love. And in her own way, she's grateful. How perfect it will be to end it by telling him she loves him too much to go on; perhaps it isn't that far from the truth.

As Elle hurriedly catches an elevator in the lobby of the Holiday Inn Hollywood, she feels eyes on her, hard and immediate. Fighting the urge to scan the crowded cubicle, she pushes the button for the 23rd floor and steps in front of the doors. As the doors open and close for exiting passengers, she catches a glimpse of a man in the back of the elevator reflected in the hallway mirrors across from the elevator on each floor. On the 12th floor, she sees that the gazing stranger and she are alone in the car.

"Windows?" the stranger inquires.

She glances over her shoulder to get a look at him. Tall, light brown shoulder length hair, deep green eyes, glowing skin, all wrapped up in a big cashmere sweater and a smile that said all the right things. She just found Jesus in an elevator at the Holiday Inn. She tries to catch her breath.

"Where else?" she answers, turning back to face the front of the elevator.

Elle sees the Jesus-like stranger's hand coming into her field of vision reaching for the stop button on the elevator. She grabs his wrist, stops it, and with her other hand, pushes the button.

The elevator comes to a sudden, screeching, halt between the 19th & 20th floors. They stand motionless in the motionless elevator. She feels his breath on her ear.

"I've always wondered what it'd feel like to push that," she whispers.

"Me too."

"Guess I beat you to it."

"Guess you did."

Jesus reaches over with his free arm and wraps it around her neck, pulling her against his body so that her face is pressed under his chin, her ass is pressed against his open pants. With his other hand that she still clenched at the wrist, he pulls up her dress and slides his hand between her legs, running it all the way up the inside of her thighs until his entire palm cradles her pussy.

"So, tell me what it felt like," he requests as he slips his fingers inside her.

She's lost in the rhythm of his fingers, lost inside of her, whose every thrust pushes her nearly bare ass against his dick, half-veiled by his thin boxers.

She doesn't answer.

He stops moving.

"The button, what'd it feel like to push it," Jesus demands.

"Oh... it felt good."

The moment she responds he resumes his rhythm.

"And so right" she offers. "And so decisive, and risky and...."

His motion grows more decisive, more risky with each word she gives him.

People outside the elevator start to bang on the door, muffled voices of concern seep in. She knows they have to let those people in soon but,

"Not now, not now, don't, not now..."

He opens her mouth wider with his free thumb and pushes his tongue deeply down her throat, sucking in all her breath, leaving her completely out. Dropping into her own orgasm, she hears Jesus moan, and is plunged into an auditory hallucination of a sublime sound teetering on the raw edge of pain and pleasure that the acquaintance made when he came. At that moment, she realizes she longed to hear it, realizes it was the only thing she genuinely liked about the acquaintance, and realizes it was enough.

She feels the wet heat of the elevator Jesus coming all over her ass.

Utterly breathless, they stand motionless in the motionless elevator.

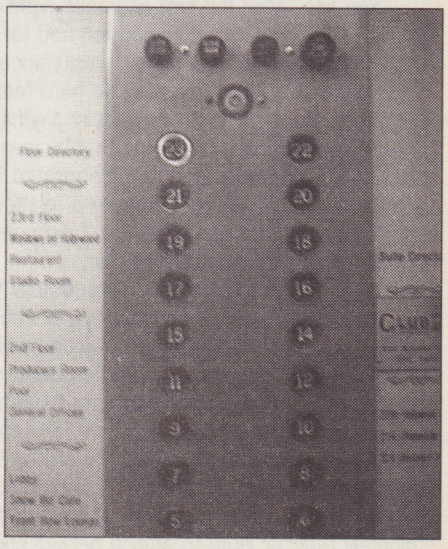
"Come here often?" Jesus asks wiping her off with the end of his cashmere sweater.

"Too often." she admits. Not turning around she leans over and pulls out the depressed stop button on the elevator.

They hit the 23rd floor. When the doors open, she lets go of the stranger's wrist, and walks out. In the hallway mirror hanging across from the elevator, she sees the reflection of a slightly disheveled yet serene woman emerging from the elevator. I am surprised to realize that Elle knows exactly who she is.

♦ ♦ ♦

Nina doesn't do much of importance, but swears she would like to, honest.



eventually shutdown as well. The murder remains unsolved.

Europe, Again

BY AARON COMETBUS

I got sick. Nobody in Europe has Goldenseal or Echinacea. I got lost and had to call a friend of a friend to save me. She was a neo-nazi who was fanatically into New York hardcore. I was stuck washing her dishes. A Belgian with a New York accent.

I found another place to stay, with a guy who worked at a paint factory. At the factory, they made only one color at a time. The week I stayed there, and the three weeks previous, they had been making grey. He came home every day mumbling, covered in grey. He was not in the best of spirits.

I went to stay with his friend, a disciple of some cult leader who made movies about cats. There were photos of the cult leader everywhere. I had to take off my shoes. His girlfriend and her mom, who hated him, also belonged to the cult. As a result, going to the cult HQ for spiritual tranquillity was often unsatisfying.

Passing through the countryside on my bike, I came across a huge castle that was evidently a squat. It could have been something else, but with a black flag and a guy with a mohawk driving a tractor out front, I made an educated guess. I explained my situation to the mohican, asking if I could possibly spend the night there. He didn't understand. He didn't speak English. Duh, foreign country, I'm so stupid, proceed to nearest gutter to sleep.

I considered throwing my bike away and walking to Paris to see a band I know. Instead, I got harassed by armies of French hicks and nearly froze to death sleeping in a pile of live rats. When I talked to the band a few months later, they said that Mick Jones had shown up to the Paris show and smoked a joint with them, and it was a shame I hadn't shown up too. Oh really.

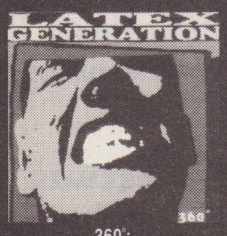
I met a guy in the Grenoble train station. Like me, he was stranded. Girl trouble. Had to wait until morning to take the train home to Lyon. We walked around and drank his beer. He was one of the best people I have ever met. I made one last try on the phone before giving up for the night, and this time I found a place to stay. I thought it would be a beautiful moment of solidarity to sleep under the bush in the park anyway, with my new friend. But instead, I left him in the cold. That's what kind of guy I am.

I stayed with a girl from Sacramento who used to be a Salvation Army bell-ringer. I didn't answer the phone or the door because it was her old boyfriend's place and I wasn't supposed to be there. Once though, I thought it was her at the door, but it wasn't. It was Morisse. I couldn't tell what he looked like because I couldn't open the door. I didn't have a key. I thought he would go away, but he crawled in through the window. He brought me to an art center called "baked chicken". Artists drank wine out of bowls. So this was Europe. I liked it alright.

Now how's that for being tucked in?

It's All Punk

OFR-20001/PUNKTURE • OFR-20002/ALL YOU CAN EAT (Manga!)
OFR-20003/ALL YOU CAN EAT (Un Oeuf) • OFR-20004/HORACE PINKER
OFR-20006/FIVE BY NINE • OFR-20007/PEP RALLY
OFR-20008/BUGLITE • OFR-20012/STEADFAST
OFR-20014/ONE GOOD EYE • OFR-20016/BLITZ BABIES
OFR-20017/LATEX GENERATION • OFR-20018/PACER TEN



360°:
Latex Generation

Let Go My E.G.O.:
One Good Eye

Thought Spawn:
Blitz Babiez

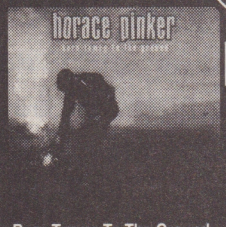
Love & Other Sorrows:
Buglite

Distributed By:
Rotz-Fax: (312) 862-6592
M.S.-Fax: (708) 582-3388

Sixteen Reasons Why:
Steadfast

Recognize:
Five By Nine

ONEFOOT RECORDS



Burn Tempe To The Ground:
Horace Pinker

ONEFOOT
P.O. Box 3834
Cherry Hill, NJ
08034-0592
FAX:
609-663-4764

Deadline:
Pep Rally

I met some jugglers. We stayed at a squat in Switzerland with graffiti in the bathroom that said, "How can we live in a community when one person makes shit and another cleans it up?" I thought that was funny. In Frieborg, a little town in Germany, it started to rain, so we went into a cafe and ordered coffee and water. The waiter said if we wanted water, we could go drink it out of the sewer.

I pissed on the Berlin Wall in tribute to Christ On Parade, who, on their European tour, pissed at every border. They also, on a U.S. tour, brought a gallon of water from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean and dumped it in. Then a gallon from the Atlantic to the Pacific, "just to mix things up".

In Hamburg I was a total wreck. I dropped a pocketful of change and it all rolled away. I met up with an old friend and she brought me to a rave. If punks still danced and fucked like rabbits, we would not lose so many people to the dance club scene. But that is just one of many problems with old friends.

I flew back to the United States, to the Burbank airport. I was so excited to be home. I was so patient for my ride to pick me up, but they never showed. I had a bunch of German nickels but no U.S. currency at all. It was 2:00 in the morning. I crawled into a bush to sleep. I woke up an hour later to sprinklers going off, soaking me and my luggage to the bone. Welcome home.

♦ ♦ ♦

Cometbus is available for $2.50 cash, or $4 for two from BBT; P.O. Box 4279; Berkeley, CA. 94704.

end.

Intimacy & Tomorrow
The Hamburg Diaries
OF MS. VAGINAL DAVIS

Tues, October 8th: I finally tell Yolanda (pet name for my mother) that I'm leaving for Hamburg, Germany to do my one wo-man show. She characteristically becomes hysterical and starts sobbing uncontrollably that, "Those Germans are going to kill my baby and re-activate those ovens in the concentration camps, and my baby is going to be experimented on by Dr. Mengele and Dr. Kavorkian and all those Nazi doctors. Oh baby don't leave me, those white people in Germany are as mean today as they were when Hitler was alive, and I don't believe he's dead, he's still in charge. Just giving orders out of Argentina. Those Germans don't like Jews and they don't like us colored folk none better..." she rants on and on and on.

Wed, Oct 9th: My assistant and costumer Crepe Suzette, who I also wrote into the show, bogarts the stewardess into putting us into first class seating because we didn't get the bulkhead seats requested. Wow! The squeaky wheel sure gets that grease. Thank god Suzette is on this trip with me. She can speak German and is the most organized person I know. Suzette does costumes for movies and TV and we last worked together on that White Party story for the *LA Weekly*. JoBeth Williams of *Poltergeist* fame is on our flight. She and Suzette just worked on a film together and are exchanging tons of Hollywood gossip. We are flying Air Lufthansa from LA to Frankfurt, then we change planes and land in Hamburg. This flight is some 11 plus hours. Boy is the food good. I'm going to pig out.

Thurs, Oct 10th: We arrive the next day in Hamburg. The weather is not as cold as I expected. Luckily Mrs. Mike Glass loaned me a warm coat and I have those leather gloves designed for me by Rick Owens. If it gets really cold, I'm going to wear pantyhose as thermal. I've been to Europe before, but never Germany. I'd much rather be in Paris, Amsterdam or London. Dirk Hauska the curator of the "Six Sex Weeks" festival that I'm performing in is late picking us up at the airport. After flirting for over a year with him via fax, I was disappointed that he wasn't sexy or handsome. He's a tiny slightly-balding little gay man who reminds me of the Dieter character on *Saturday Night Live*. He remembered seeing me perform in New York several years ago and thought I would be perfect for this festival. He tells me that they also wanted Lydia Lunch, but the owner of the theater thought that having Lydia and Ron Athey would be too dark. Poor Dirk, I sense he is aware of my disappointment in his looks. We bring him a present of Tequila and that perks him up a bit.

We are staying at a 5th floor walkup six blocks from the theater. It's a pretty spacious three bedroom flat with a bathroom and full working kitchen loaded with herb teas, yummy!

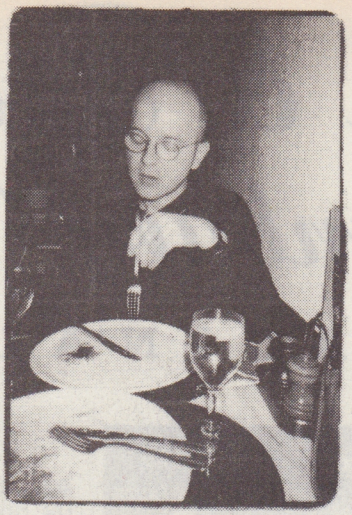
Suzette and I each get our own room and the third bedroom is occupied by this boy named Bernal who is part of Jennifer Blowdryer's "SmutFest", this week's festival show. Bernal is a strikingly handsome, personable Limey with huge feet.

Dirk takes us to the Schmidtt Theater so we can look at the space where we will be performing. The theater is part of a chain on the Reeperbahn, the red-light district of Hamburg. Walking to the Schmidtt, we notice dog doo all over. Don't people curb their pups here? Guess not. We stop off at the St. Pauli Theater Cafe where Dirk's office is up above, and he treats us to tea. We run into Jennifer Blowdryer and some of her guest stars. I've known of Jennifer for years. She lived in San Francisco, was in the White Trash Debutantes and wrote for *Maximum Rock 'N Roll*. Now she's based in The East Village and has hosted these SmutFests in different cities and also as an HBO special. We meet Billie Madley, a New York retro stripper ala Gypsy Rose Lee. Suzette, Jennifer and Billie tentatively plan on going out to the country to see a concentration camp together. They all share a queasy feeling in being Jewish in a country with a notorious anti-Semitic past. I begin to feel like my mother's crazy warnings may not be so nutty after all. Billie mentions that Barbara Streisand has refused to set foot on German soil. I don't blame her. Maybe I shouldn't be here either. We finally see the theater and I'm shocked at how large it is. I'm so used to tiny performance spaces that a real theater with a follow spot and dressing room is a lil intimidating. How are we ever going to fill all these seats? I'm not exactly a household word in Germany, and this theater can fit 400 at least. Dirk confides in us that he was disappointed by Tim Miller's turnout during his "My Queer

Something or Other" show. It seems he only had about 35 people each night and had to cancel his performance workshop because of lack of interest. This festival is being promoted like a mainstream theater show, and my audience is not that crossover. Tonight we plan to check out Jennifer's show to see what we've gotten ourselves into.

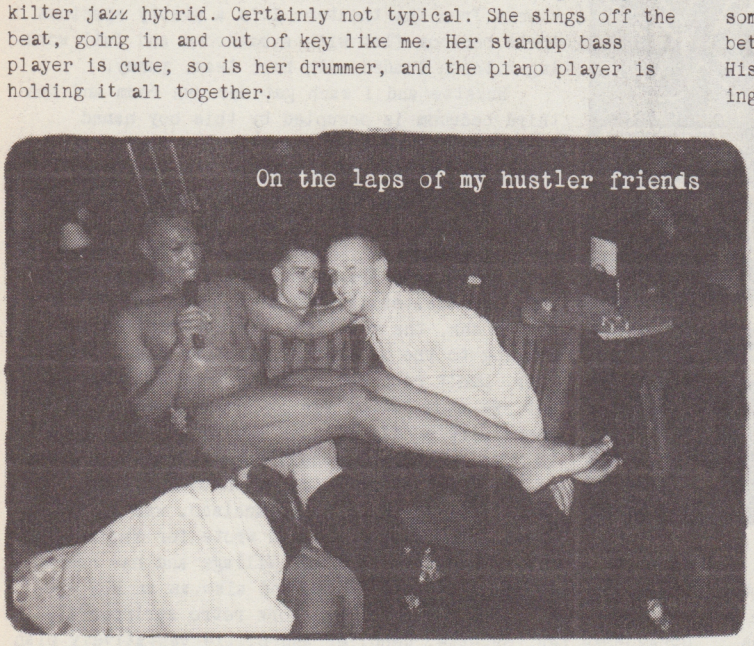
Suzette goes into a health food store and a drug store and is told that you cannot get Melatonin in Germany. We both feel jet-lagged so we retire to the flat to take a disco nap before Jennifer's show.

We get back to the theater and see Bernal in front promoting the show trying to drum up an audience. He is dressed as a giant clock with makeup painted on his eye lids to simulate open eyes when he closes them. His look is a bit low-rent Leigh Bowery. I have to admit that he is completely transformed. I didn't know his act was pseudo-drag. He didn't strike me as a drag queen.



Dirk Hauska

Jennifer's draw tonight is pretty good. The audience is so middle age, like season ticket holders in the states. They also don't seem to understand English. Everyone told me people in Hamburg knew English. That doesn't seem to be the case. Jennifer's show is something of a vaudeville review. She acts as the hostess and sings some songs with a combo of local street musicians. The audience seems puzzled everytime she opens her mouth. I'm fascinated by the clunky costumes and ratty wigs she's wearing. Her music is amazing. Very off-kilter jazz hybrid. Certainly not typical. She sings off the beat, going in and out of key like me. Her standup bass player is cute, so is her drummer, and the piano player is holding it all together.



On the laps of my hustler friends

Bernal does this great number where he sings "Singing in the Rain" while pissing on the audience. I was surprised that they didn't mind being urinated on. These Germans are really kinky. Bernal sings "My Way" with his butthole. Showstopping. Allison and Minx are the two other British performers on the bill. They both engage in what I could only call therapy stripping. Susan and I agree that they are brilliant. Rounding out the bill is the belly dancing Aram, who has these long dirty fingernails and is Hamburg's male equivalent to our Europa. A drag queen dominatrix named Lady Yvonne tied her handsome club-cocked, bubble butt slave/lover into an intricate bondage spiderweb. Hanging out with Jennifer after her show, she told us that she was savagely panned by the critics who said that the Smutfest wasn't smutty enough.

Fri, Oct 11th: Suzette is making me take these nasty Echinacea pills. Stressing over this trip has left me with a nasty cough and nose/throat/chest congestion. Suzette confines me to bed. She is a great cook, making healthy soups. If she wasn't here I'd starve. I only had $150 American money to bring on the trip, and it is three times as expense here as in New York.

Later in the evening we dress in matching outfits and identical Bo Derrick cornrow wigs and canvas all of St. Pauli handing out thousands of fliers. If we are going to draw a crowd for our shows, we have to promote. We even recruit the district prostitutes in their Jane Fonda-ish aerobicswear to hand out our fliers. Germans are very aggressive. A matronly woman grabbed at my crotch. She said in German she couldn't tell if I was a man or woman. A big beer drinking blond hooligan lifted my obese self up over his head and spanked my ass. In America I have to chase men, here I have to run away from them.

After hours of promotion on the streets of the Reeperbahn, we're exhausted. There are no open container laws here. Everyone just brandishes beer cans on the street. Dirk's assistant Susanne Romer hired me to perform at the late-night Cabaret at the Schmidtt. I don't want to perform before my run starts Tuesday, but I need the money, and it will give me a chance to test my material on a live German audience. Beck warned me that Germans are a hard audience to crack. I plan on giving the Cabaret audience my 50 cents show. The host is some bi-sexual queen named Kay Ray. He's sort of a cross between Boy George and Pete Burns, if you can imagine that. His make-up was flawless in that Way Bandy school of contouring. He sang cover songs of popular Top 40 tunes. It was packed and the audience loved him. Germans are really into cornpone. My performance actually went over a lot better than I thought. It caught the audience by surprise seeing a giant black queen in a traditional Bavarian dirndle. The Lesbians in the crowd really loved me. Thank god LaLa taught me that gross und shvantz means nasty big dick.

After the show, Aram took us to this gay bar called The Wonder Bar. We did some more promoting passing out fliers. A bevy of sexy German boys flirted with me. I'm still in drag mind you. Drag doesn't seem to bother these German gay boys. Of course some of them seemed like typical drag hags, but a few were sincerely attracted to me. These German boys are all tall and strapping. No narrow flat asses here. These white kids have black butts and huge appendages. Their endowment cups runneth over. Suzette is talking to a cutesy and she introduces him to me. His name is Thorsten and he is a primal beauty. The most translucent skin and lips of vermillion. I tell him he is a vamp. And he obliges me by biting seriously on my neck. I'm surprised he didn't draw blood. He's a wee short 5'8" or 5'9", but with a melon ass that really fills out a pair of Levis. He gets really close to me when he talks, and the only turnoff is that he has this huge herpes sore on his upper lip. I guess a kiss is out of the question. He's 23 years old and is a medical student by day and a high price call-boy at night. David Geffen would hire him in a hot second. His English is impeccable and he even understands my slang usage. We're really hitting it off when Suzette announces she's retiring for the night. I want to stay and talk to him, but then I worry about being able to find my way back to the apartment. I'm still a little rusty in that area. I decide to take my chances.

This boy is so candid. I grill him on the Hamburg hustling

scene and he tells me that he and his boyfriend Denis make $500 marks a trick. Or as they coyly refer to their johns as "guests". I've never met a hustler as honest as Thorsten. He's obviously a rent boy for fun, profit and life experiences. His lover, Denis, arrives at the bar and joins us. He is 20, tall with a dorky musculature. I immediately feel drawn to him though Thorsten is definitely the sexier of the two. He reminds me of my lawyer friend Marcus Bastida when he first came to LA fresh from the shores of Seattle. It's five o'clock in the morning when my new-found friends walk me home and we make plans to get together again. I can't wait.

Sat, Oct 12th: Spent all day sleeping. In the early evening Suzette and I put our Bo Derrick's back on for more promoting. People really don't speak English here. My show is so verbal I'm worried they won't understand a word. Oh what does it matter, I don't care if they even like my show, I'm still going to get paid; I have a contract.

Met a lot of nice people on the streets. Straight guys love drag queens here. Got several marriage proposals. We decide we are not going to do any more promoting.

Hanging out at the theater cafe, a distinguished looking Dane presents me with a rose and chats me up trying to pimp off his teenage son to me. The boy was magnificent. It seems those Scandinavian libertines think it's a hoot for their children to experience all the many forms of sexual pleasures when they come of age. Me and Suzette were shocked when this Danish daddy referred to his son as a tasty morsel.

Sun, Oct 13th: It rained all day today so we stayed in. Splurged from cooking routine and ate at a Greek restaurant. The food was delicious. They even treated us to free Ouzo. Suzette is becoming quite disturbed by our flatmate Bernal who she says leaves nasty chunks of dooky residue on the rim of the toilet seat. We have maid service in this flat, so maybe the toilet will get the once-over twice.

Bernal has been staying out all night every night after performing. He fancies the Tom Bar where he has been in the back room chugga-lugging on the plentiful peters of Hamburg. He told me that he got picked up one night by a Brazilian gogo dancer who plowed him so hard he thought he had broken his ribs and slipped a disc. Suzette thinks Bernal's promiscuity is disgusting.

Mon, Oct 14: This is our free day to do whatever we want. I'm glad Suzette hasn't mentioned going to the concentration camp. I *am* curious, but the thought of a long expensive train ride out of the city doesn't exactly ignite me. We wind up taking the tube to the downtown area. Suzette is obsessed with finding the Jil Sander store. It's so good to get out of the St. Pauli area. It's a bit bleak where we're staying and I'm longing to see a bit of the city. In the nicer part of town people don't let their dogs dookie all over the place. We even visit the local university and I flirt with a

stockpile of hot German youthquakers. Suzette likes to window-shop, while I prefer people watching. There aren't enough people out and about for my tastes. Dirk said that my posters would be splashed all over the city, in the subways and everywhere. The only poster I see is the festival poster, which is cute, but it tells nothing about the individual performers – it just has our names on it. Why did I bother getting someone to design a poster if it's not going to be seen anywhere but in the Schmidt-owned theaters?

It's funny being promoted as a mainstream theater act. This festival is sandwiched between Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'" and "Cats". On one level it's good not to be marginalized like I am in the U.S., but I don't feel any of us are being promoted to our true audience here, and I *do* have one.

Tues, Oct.15th: Woke up early. Got to theater by noon to begin tech rehearsal for the first performance of my piece tonight at 6:00. Lots of butterflies. Met with tech guys and gave them our bribes of tequila and Club Sucker T-shirts. It worked. They love us. It seems no other performers thought to bring them presents. My mother always taught me to be gracious. Our techies are cute. Carston is the soundman and he is young, blond, almondine eyes, and leather pant wearing with a nice bulge up front. Franc is a dark Turkish looking pure German with a great rump, saucy tits, a keen sense of humor, and massive peni projectile. Aren't there any cashew-sized penises in Deutchland? I really love my tech guys, they both speak proficient English and love our ideas of using the stage. They didn't care for Jennifer or her show.

Mr. & Mrs. Ron Athey calls from London to wish us luck. She is so thoughtful.

We have very little time for tech before we must be dressed and ready to meet the media for a formal press conference.

Suzette and I haven't even rehearsed together, as she was working on a film when I previewed this piece at LACE Gallery before coming to Hamburg. We get into a major rowe as we are finishing up tech. Suzette is not afraid of me, and isn't taking any of my excrement. She really knows her stuff and isn't about to let my negativity overwhelm and destroy this project.

I'm interviewed by all the dailies, and the local and national TV. The news reporter for the local station sure is hot in that mean German way. I feel like he's mentally undressing me during the interview.

Opening night and I'm awful. The audience doesn't speak English. It's in the program that this festival's all English speaking. What gives? Our small audience is made up mostly of reviewers. This theater is so weird, people can smoke while they watch you. Suzette is worried that when we go out into the audience to find someone for me to shrimp in the first act, he'll have stinky feet. Luckily I pick a cute young cooperative guy to be our first sacrificial lamb. The owner of the Schmidtt, Mario Rispo, loves our show. The slides that Mrs. Glass made of Face's (Steve Meters) paintings came out great. The projection of my film "That Fertile Feeling" was less successful. I just assumed they would have a large screen. Never assume anything in a foreign country.

Wed, Oct 16: Annie Sprinkle and her girlfriend Kim Silver arrive and come to my second night. The crowd is a bit bigger and we cut some of the verbiage and stick with broad visuals. They really like the segments with rap music – anything that is typically black American. I'm utilizing the individual audience members as translators and interpreters.

Annie Sprinkle is pretty, soft-spoken and vivacious. Her girlfriend has a lot of manic unbridled energy. It was wonderful having them in the audience. Finally people who understood what I'm saying.

After my show, Dirk takes us along with Annie and her girlfriend to a party for the Hamburg film festival. Annie is such a celebrity in Hamburg. The paparazzi go crazy as we wildly hit the dance floor.

I meet a juicy Greek art rep named Dimitri and another well endowed hunk named Udo. This Safe Sex Troupe from Amsterdam perform a routine where they plop their giant willy's out of their pants and do a synchronized helicopter. I remember I was supposed to meet up with my hustler boys, so Suzette and I go back to the flat. My hustlers are right on time to take me out bar hopping. Germans are so nice and prompt.

My hustlers take me out for a snack at a turkish restaurant, then we pop in to all the rent-boy bars where they buy me drinks and get me fairly tanked. Only in Germany do hustlers treat you to an evening out.

Thurs, Oct 17th: Annie's director Daniel Banks arrives into town and comes to see our show. He's sexy; I think I'd like to experience some brother to brother love from him. I've added more German words like Yungfrau which means virgin. In the second part of the show, after the intermission, I forgot to lick on a lollipop so when I sang my "French" song and started French kissing this hot boy in the audience I unloaded upon him a bad case of acid breath. Poor thing.

One of the cabaret show performers Mick M. starts flirting with me after my show. He says he lives on some houseboat and has access to a private plane. I ain't getting on nobodies boat or teenie tiny plane. Besides Mick M. looks like he doesn't bathe. His fingernails are really grungy. One thing I have to credit him with is his criticism of my show is valid. He says I should cut the film in the beginning and that my Afro Sisters protest medly doesn't work for a German audience that can't relate to a '70s black nationalist period they never experienced.

Audience member in mom's clothes

Fri, Oct 18th: Our TV news spot aired last night and we almost sold out in presales. Finally, some kind of momentum building. Suzette and I are showing more and more skin as the week progresses. It's strange what aspects of the show this audience finds amusing. When I put on my '40s style wig and glasses and say I'm wearing a neo-conservative chic outfit by my careerist dyke designer ex-lover Jil Sander they all break out laughing. Wearing the Doctor outfit also gets them going. They really have this complex with authority figures. My lactation sequence also provokes disbelief and jaw-dropping. We've started taking pictures of the audience at the very end while we're stark naked. I have a sex date tonight with this guy named Udo. So much for my Dr. Laura Schlessinger spiel about only wanting exclusivity and commitment.

Sat, Oct 19th: Suzette and I go downtown to site-see some more. We get in a bit of a tiff, and she leaves me stranded there. Surprisingly I figured out how to get back to our flat without her.

Good crowds, Dimitri came to show and Kim Silver brought Annie's German Manager, Emily, to see us. Emily was the first big black model to make it in Europe in the early '70s. She's hot. My hustler boys come to see us – they are so delish. They bring this amazing Austrian boy who used to live with them in a threegy.

The Serpentina proletariat fashion show sequence really goes over big with the dowagers in the audience. Everyone wants to wear my mother's clothes and wigs and prance about on stage.

Suzette and I perform together at the late night cabaret. The crowd is a rowdy bunch of soccer playing hooligans. There was some big championship and all these loud drunk athletes are in the audience. We do the shrimping scene, and I pick a real strapping drunken fellow who almost passes out as I'm sucking his toes. The crowd goes crazy, especially when I tell them I like big white penis. A lot of those soccer players were waiting for me after the show like Johnny Eagers, but they didn't recognize me in boy drag when I passed by them.

After seeing the show, Emily, wants to represent me and get me booked in Munich, Berlin & Cologne. She says in all those cities people speak English and I could make $2000 marks a night.

Suzette says something really profound about how I'm always Ms. Davis and that I should use my real name off stage to keep from being so schitzo and feeling like I have to be "on" all the time.

Sun, Oct 20th: Thank god it's my last performance night in Hamburg. I'm really getting sick of Germany. I love it, yet I hate it.

We listened to Mick M. and cut the show drastically. I felt the pace flows better now. Six nights of wearing these outfits, they are so soiled and stinky

After the show Suzette goes off with Kay Ray to see some drag show. We need space from each other. Dimitri takes me out to a fancy dinner. The food was good, just a lil bland. Dimitri wants to bring me out to Greece and Italy for some shows. I wonder if Dimitri is Greek active or Greek passive.

Dimitri and I go to the WonderBar and we drink and talk for hours. I can't tell if he wants to shagg me or not. Sometimes he talks to me like a lover, but the vibe that is most pronounced is draghag.

Mon, Oct 21st: We go to Dirk's office

Me, Kim, Annie, & Dirk

to get paid. Germany takes out 18% tax off the top. Due to the high cost of the tickets – around 50 U.S. dollars – I surprisingly came out making a little cash to at least pay my rent next month and phone bill. Good.

The theater publicist gives me my reviews. I was ripped to shreds by one paper that said my show "Intimacy & Tomorrow" should be called "Stupidity, Today". I love bad reviews. It really shows they were paying attention.

When I get back to the states, I'm off for Seattle, home of the hypodermic space needle.

We say our tearful goodbye to our tech crew. I find out that my lighting guy Franc has gotten two girls pregnant and has two other children by two different women. Suzette and I fight over who our soundman Carston wants to shag, me or her. He isn't gay, but I think he would still love to fraggle me. The theater is hosting some safe sex party, so the staff is covering all the seats with plastic.

My hustlers, my hamburgers, cook us a fantastic farewell dinner. Denis, the 20 year old, does the majority of the cooking. He is so into his queeny presentation. I love it. A young auntie. They even make dessert.

These boys are fearless when talking about themselves. They even admit to not having safe sex, and getting really hooked on crystal and ecstasy. I make Denis throw out the window a bottle of poppers that I found on the floor. These boys are so much more reflective of their bad choices. Those slutty boys that go to my club Sucker could learn from them. Thorsten says he will try to save money to come out and visit me in the Spring.

The boys give me some photos of them engaging in sex for some gay rag. Hot!

Tues, Oct 22nd: We leave Hamburg at six in the morning. Too bad we didn't save all our receipts, we could have gotten back the tax that we spent for all purchases.

We get our bulkhead seats, and the plane is nearly empty so it's a very comfy flight. The movies back are "Up Close and Personal" with wrinkly apple-doll faced Robert Redford and Michele Pfeifer. Is this film supposed to be Jessica Savich's story? I think not. Mainstream Hollywood filmaking at its worst. The second feature "Mission Impossible" starring gay activist/actor Tom Cruise was very entertaining.

Wed, Oct 23 – Sat, Oct 26: I slept for three days. Didn't unpack, didn't return my million phone calls, didn't do anything but sleep.

Sun, Oct 27th: Return to club Sucker. Some young band with really cute boys plays. I ask bass player to sit on my face, he blushes.

Mon, Oct 28th: Get together with Mrs. Glass for high tea at Jose Montoya's new Echo Park hillside compound. Bring a duffelbag of my dirty laundry to take advantage of Jose's washer and dryer. Beautiful sunset, good tea.

Tues, Oct 29th: Leave for Seattle on Alaska Airlines. LA is crisp, and clear. Arrive two hours later to a bright sunny unseasonably cold Puget day. At least it's not raining. Mrs. Bradley Thompson picks me up at the airport. She used to live in LA and work at LACE Gallery and is now the acting director at Center on Contemporary Art who have hired me for this show. I was supposed to do an installation recreating my Hag Gallery, but there was no time for that. After seeing the current exhibit, I'm sort of glad I'm not in this show. They have people like Richard Hawkins, who is sexy with a large peter, but his art is a little too deconstructivist for my taste buds. Meet Brad's cute assistant Carla Figueroa, a fellow Latina.

I'm staying with Jimothy Jones, the publisher of Zero Hour Press. Jim published that short story of mine in his anthology "Good To Go." I love little Jimothy. He's a big rice queen, always chasing after these spicy little Oriental numbers.

Jim takes me to dinner in the Capital Hill area of the city and we walk along Broadway and check out all the faggots. Seattle has the freshest cuties. All pale with rosy cheeks. Jim tells me the Seattle getting loaded AGAIN gossip, and the latest scores on who has drop-kicked who. We go to a few dull gay bars and then call it a night.

Wed, Oct 30th: I'm staying in Jim's condo in the Queen Anne section of the city. From my large bedroom I have a glorious view of downtown. I thought LA public transportation was bad. You might as well walk than wait for a bus in Seattle. I'm anxious to explore, my other visits to Seattle were with my band PME and we just did one show and zipped out of town. I play tourista and cruised the public market flirting with all the cute fisherman boys. I walk up Pine Street to Capital Hill and do some daytime ho strolling. People are so much friendlier in the Pacific Northwest. There aren't many Negroes in this town, so I am a hot commodity. I take a bus to the University District and wind up in the middle of high snow heaven. So many sexy young fresh white boys. I'm going to OD on all these juicy keeblers.

I walk around the university for hours. In some building looking for the toilet I stumble upon the Huskies locker room and wind up sucking off some studly blonde athletic god with a bubble butt, nice unveiny shaft and training bra-sized tits. A few of his buddies show up and I service them as well. I'm a retarded whore all right – always forgetting to charge.

Thurs, Oct 31st: My first Seattle Halloween. Jim wanted to be

Twiggy, but he didn't exactly have the Twiggy wardrobe, so after I style him and beat on a face, he winds up as Twiggy's mother. Halloween is just another day for me, so I dress in oversized Dickies and shirt with stocking cap, borrow a blonde shag wig and tell people I'm either Faith Evans (Notorious B.I.G.'S wife) or Mary J. Blidge.

We start the evening out at this tired house party, where everyone was wearing some pretty awful outfits. Luckily we have to leave early so that I can be at the screening of *Hustler White* at the closing night of the Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. The crowd gave me a standing ovation and I introduced the film apologizing that Tony Ward couldn't be here, and that my boy drag role in the film is a stretch for me. The audience was hooting and hollering throughout. No one walked out like in some of the other festivals.

We end the evening at the Crocodile Cafe watching the Voluptuous Horror of Karen Black perform a special show. The whole band was flown into town from New York. They were amazing as usual and sang some new songs. New bass player Teddy really shines.

Fri, Nov 1st: Get together with Kembra, Somoa, and the band to eat at some Japanese Restaurant in the Westin Hotel. They are all eating sushi. I order chicken teriyaki and shrimp tempura. The band members will fly back tomorrow while Samoa and Kembra will do some acoustic Karen Black Lite shows, before going down to San Francisco to teach at the Art Institute and then LA to do Sucker.

Decide to check out the gay mall on Broadway. It really is a gay mall. I've never seen such unabashed cruising. I check out the English film *Beautiful Thing* at the cinaplex in the mall. I love this movie. The black girl's obsession with Mama Cass is so Ms. Davis.

I get picked up in the mall by this wigger, wearing the prerequisite oversized clothing look. It's so cold here that I'm sporting a bit of layered oversizing.

This kid is only 21 and fresh. He has posters of Tupac and Dr. Dre and Shaquile O'Neill and the black model Tyson all over the place. He's obsessed, I guess I'm his Mandingo love fantasy. Well, if I can do it in *Hustler White*, I can do it in real life.

Wow, when these children take off their baggy clothes they sure have hot bodies underneath. This boy has one of the flattest washboard six-pack stomachs I've ever seen. It's so sexy when a white boy has a black ass. His sphinc hole is so clean I wonder if he uses a colostomy bag. His hole doesn't taste like anything muddy ever crosses its path. Good thing I had some condominiums in my pocket. If I hadn't he is such a rock bottom that he wouldn't have cared. These young boys are reckless.

Sat, Nov 2nd: Apologized to Jim for not calling to tell him that I was spending the night at a trick's house. No big deal, he figured I got Joboxer lucky.

Catch up on sleep to make up for last night's fornication.

Christ Novoselic picks me up for dinner. Last time I was in Seattle I shrimped his giant feet on stage. He tells me his new band played at the Seattle Gay Pride festival. Now that's disturbing.

I ditch Christ (I didn't think he was going to let me chow down on his big Croatian wank) and later hook up with one of Ron Athey's ex-tricks from Stonewall 25th celebration. We go to a lame post-Halloween party at this leather bar called The Cuff, not to be confused with Silverlake Cuff's or as it's affectionately known: Cufflinks.

You know a bar is tired when all the bad genderfuck drag bartenders start breaking into the Macarena.

We check out The Eagle, which turned out to be a good cruise bar. Lots of hot action, with everyone spinning the soul for getting down. I start flirting with this guy and he turns out to be the writer D. Travers Scott who I met years ago in Chicago. I ask him where his hunky corn-fed Midwestern boyfriend David Echkardt was, and he tells me he's in San Francisco on business. OH.

My dance card was being filled tonight. So many guys approaching me. A real hot daddy goes to get me a drink, and when he leaves this man jumps in and starts talking to me. He's really queeny. The first thing out of his mouth is, "Faaaab-ulous!". He's around 35-40 years of age with a little gray at the temples, but his face is very unlined and youthful. The key to aging gracefully is stay out of the sun. No problem in Seattle. Well the daddy returns with my drink and sees that I'm preoccupied and excuses himself. Shucks, I wanted that hot daddy. The two o'clock bell rings and I wind up at Nelly guy's place masquerading as a hot top. His apartment didn't have a Patrick Nagle, but it sure had a lot of knick-knacks and things with doilies. Being a mature man, in the morning he made me some strong coffee and cooked a delicious post-coital breakfast. Oh and when he gave me his card I laughed out loud: Bryan Bryce Beadle III. I asked him if he was related to the Mayflower Madam.

Sun, Nov 3 & Mon, Nov 4: Rain kept me indoors watching *MTV*. No wonder I'm not a mainstream success. My music sure doesn't sound like anything on *MTV*. Who *are* all these bands anyway? I've never heard of any of them. I hardly ever watch TV anymore, and since I don't have cable I just am not up on the latest.

Tues, Nov 5th – Election day: My show is tonight at the Coca Gallery. I'm giving them a 50 cents job. I'm sorry they are not paying me enough to go all out.

Still raining so spent all day watching more *MTV* which is giving the election coverage. Some religious right lady is running for governor of Washington State and everyone is afraid she may win.

My show was surreal. Opening for me was this Gay Men's Chorus that had a few lesbians in it. They were all wearing these home applique vests and sang songs about "Some of My Best Friends Are Straight." Where is Romanofsky and Phillips when you need them. I did my shrimp routine AGAIN. I picked out of the audience Carla's 6'8" humpy dork husband. He wears a size 15 shoe – need I say more? I feel sorry for the bands that went on after me. The crowd all came to see me, and left right after my show.

Wed, Nov 6th: Raining again. Watched more MTV. Love Beck's new video for "Devil's Haircut." They also showed the Beck video that my Rayvn Cymone McFarland character (the lead singer of Black Fag) is in.

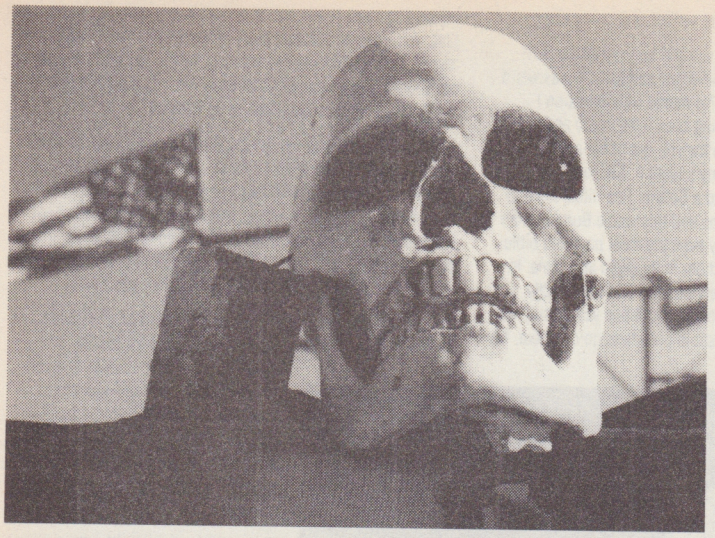
Bruce Pavitt of Sub Pop Records takes me, Brad, and Carla out to dinner at this place called Cyclops. Food is good. Get introduced to stunning Chris Cornell of Soundgarden and his wife. Talk about a henpecked rock star. I've never seen such a bad case of pussywhip.

Still raining, but it's my last night in Seattle so I'm going out, even if I melt.

Stop in at this bar called Paddywhack on Pike Street. It's a male stripper joint like Chippendales only with a twist. Seems like the crowd is a mixture of big hair suburban girls' night out hags, and middle-aged gay men looking for houseboys. Wild. The dancers are an odd mix of black, Asian, Latin and white boys. They dance on poles on two darkly lit stages. The girls are going wild, but the men are much more subdued – meekly tipping the bulging g-strings. There is a screened room with booths where the dancers take their male and female clients for a $13 private lap dance. I was tempted, but my budget prevented the expense.

♦ ♦ ♦

Ms. Davis is the loony hostess of Sucker, LA's unique Sunday afternoon punk rock beer bust & T-dance. She is also a cult movie star & experimental filmmaker. She can be seen in the new Bruce LaBruce/Rick Castro film "Hustler White" & heard on her CD "Too White To Be Angry" produced by Steve Albini with her metal thrash band Pedro, Muriel & Esther on the Spectra Sonic label distributed by K & Cargo Records. As a literary figurine her short story, "Dead President's Son" can be found in the new anthology "Unnatural Disasters" on Inconnunicato Press, edited by Nicole Panter.



BURNING MAN 96
BY HOWARD HALLIS

TRUELOVE AND REAL LOVE may be two very different things and this trip better not end up the way it started. Erich and I were sitting in front of Bix & Riley's house waiting for Reverend Al to call. My mom got pissed and drove away and it's all my fault because I lost the directions to his house. So now we wait stranded at the 3 Hole Punch residence with a whole bunch of shit on the driveway. Erich kept talking about cars after a Maserati passed by.

Why do I get a bad feeling about this trip? Maybe because there's 10,000 people expected this year at Burning Man. Maybe it's because there might be Born Again Christians and Young Republicans out at Black Rock setting up camp alongside the anarchists and psycho artists. Maybe it's because 1996 is turning out to be an even shittier year than 1995. Don't get me wrong, there's been some cool stuff that's happened recently. I got to see Love & Rockets at The Viper Room and the same month saw Dead Can Dance, Kiss and The Sex Pistols. I put up a web site (http://leary.com/howard/HowardHallisHome.html) and even began writing a shitty science fiction novel about a guy who sends his penis into space. But the shit has been shitty in 1996. My grandpa was so sick I almost didn't go to Burning Man in case he dropped dead that weekend. One of my good friends has terminal cancer. My boss Timothy Leary died, which REALLY bummed me out. Now I'm working at The Viper Room and it's all right but doesn't come close to paying the bills. My girlfriend was always cranky and pissed off about something or other and I was being forced to move back in with my parents because I couldn't afford my crappy apartment. Burning Man was the one thing (besides The Descendents at The Whiskey) that I was looking forward to before the year let out.

When we finally got to Reverend Al's we loaded up the van and headed out. Erich, Al & I traveled up with Rich Polysorbate, bomb expert and part-time Imperial Butt Wizard. The Flamingos came on the radio and started the trip. "I Only Have Eyes For You" was followed by "Mr. Peppermint", a children's album done by a Texas television host that just happened to be Gibby Haynes' dad and was 1000 times more twisted than anything The Butthole Surfers have done recently. I sat on a box which later on I found out was full of incredibly powerful explosives. We talked about Muhammed Ali fighting tooth decay and Rich accidentally hit a switch which set off the siren on his bullhorn, which scared the shit out of all of us because if the cops had found all the TNT we had they would have thought we were a militia on our way to the nearest federal building.

We stopped in a small town near Reno and I got a pack of Morningstar cigarettes. Was this foreshadowing? You know it, dear reader. After that we made a gas and Taco Bell stop in Reno and then drove until we got on to the playa.

Our camp was set up at Lost Vegas near Chicken John and we crashed out for as long as we could before the relentless sun woke us up. When we awoke, Reverend Al began to set up Tinseltown. They brought up a giant styrofoam Oscar, a Marilyn Monroe mannequin, cut-outs of Shwarzenegger, Al Jolson, Jim Carrey, Ronald Reagan, and Steven Speilberg along with enough explosives to blow up a small town. Each of the cut outs had skulls and 666 painted in human blood on their foreheads. This was done to amuse the Born Again contingent that was rumored to be out and about at this year's festival. Fuck, maybe we could get airtime on The Trinity Network!

Setting up the props in the scalding sun was hell. Pure hell. Even with a pleathora of blue Kool-Aid in squeezy bottles to satiate my thirst, I still got mild heatstroke.

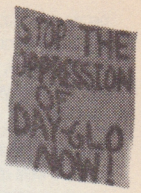
There were some cool camp sites set up this year. Mudhenge was very well done. It looked like Stonehenge only it was beige. There was a bunch of rave camps and drum circle hippie camps. No offense, but waking up to the incessant thumping of the same stupid beat may one day drive me to kill those longhairs who smoke their demon weed and wear the sign of the American Chicken! (hee hee!) Chicken John did a damn good job with his Vegas site I should also mention. There was the Surburban Home Camp, The House Of Doors, the perennial Camera Obscura, all the art cars and a few sites based on aliens, Revelations or circus freaks.

Burning Man is kind of like The World Wide Web in the sense that there are lots of different sites representing almost everything under the sun. Some are elaborately done with many hours put into their construction and maintenance, while others are half-assed down-to-the-basics deals. As the years go by the sites get better and better, with more features being added in the attempt to become even greater and more impressive than before. Unlike The Web though, these sites are only up for a few days and then get burned down in a fury of fire and discord. Will the same fate befall The Internet? Maybe. Atlantis, Mu and Lemuria probably had computers of some sort. The only problem is that it's hard to keep records of all the various Nodes when the main energy source is cut off.
The only fossils that will remain will be the dead hardware and data cartridges. The sphinxes and pyramids of the futurepast.

Bugs were around this year in great number, especially by Chicken John's. I almost got eaten alive by little flying gnats. They weren't there at all in the years before. Guess natural selection has breeded a bug that knows when to go to the salt flats and feed on humans, even if it is only one week out of the year. Galapogos eat your heart out!

Erich and I walked the playa with my old Gefilte Fuck bandmate Mark X. There were lots of topless girls all over the place and since there's something primal in every heterosexual man that reacts to the site of bare mammaries I felt kind of horny.

Is it a genetic psychological thing or does society breed the boob lust into us here in America by making it seem naughty? Maybe it's societal because by censoring it they made it more desirable, but it could also be genetic like women's legs. I see legs every night on TV but they still turn me on. You can see breasts too, but no nipple. The Nipple Factor may do something weird to us Americans, just like The Clitoris Factor may do something to the Asians.



Erich, Mark & I saw a lot of cool stuff on our Thursday night walk. We saw some guy put his entire body through a tennis racket. After that, I put on my giant alien mask and walked around freaking people out. The mask looks really convincing from a distance. After a small Karaoke performance which ended with me falling off the stage, we all went to sleep.

Friday started early with a Born Again Christian guy scoping out the Tinseltown set. He had a viewfinder camera and an umbrella hat and was quietly narrating to his recorder all the Satanic imagery he saw as he filmed. I told him the 666's painted on the cut outs of the actors we had at Tinseltown were done with real human blood. This freaked him out.

Justin, Meredyth and a whole bunch of the Los Angeles Cacophony contingent had set up near Lost Vegas and I had a few beers over there in mid-afternoon. After that, Erich and I went into Gerlach and got food and drinks. There were lots of Nevada police on the highways. The sheriffs have discovered how much money can be made with an event like Burning Man. Almost everyone is carrying something illegal, be it drugs, explosives or stolen props from *The Power Rangers*.

Erich and Meredyth decided to do mushrooms on Friday and I babysat them. Meredyth was sometimes subtley, sometimes obviously hitting on me. It was making me uncomfortable. We walked into main camp and got some Mad Cow Burgers at McSatan's and then headed back to Lost Vegas after an aimless wandering around the playa.

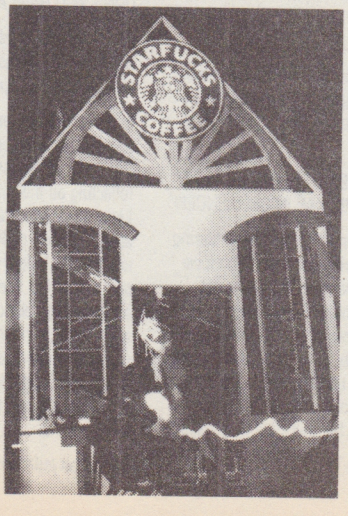
At Vegas, Meredyth got on stage with a band that was doing some awful sounding noodling on guitar, bass & drum and began chanting a mantra over and over again:

"FUCK YEAH! FUCK YEAH! FUCK YEAH! FUCK YEAH! FUCK YEAH!"

It was quite brilliant and funny. She just kept going and going and going like that Nurse With Wound song "Rockette Morton". A lot of people wanted to kill her until I suggested she say a few "HELL NO's" between the "FUCK YEAH's". She must have repeated those 2 phrases for over 20 minutes straight. It was so maddening I had to get away from her, so I went over to the statue of the Burning Man with Kathy and Sally and brought my sleeping bag. All three of us lay down between its legs and looked up at the wood and neon above us that we knew in two days would be burnt to the ground.

Saturday was the day I went to Hell.

It started out fine enough. In the morning I went over to the Wood Pussy campsite and drank coffee with Victoria of Big Bang club fame. Michele was there too, and she looked amazing. I've had a crush on her for a while and we spent a long time chatting. She was working for Rock For Choice and that really impressed me. There's nothing cooler than people who give a damn about protecting our right to decide whether or not we want to bring another life into the world. Some activists kind of bug me, especially the ones who don't have a sense of humor, but I'll take them any day over the "Been There Done That" scenesters who don't do anything all day but watch bad TV and sulk in their nihilism.



All my flirting with Michele lead nowhere, and I knew I wasn't going to get laid out there this year. I had a girlfriend back home as I said

before, and I looked like a wreck. No contacts, Coke bottle nerd glasses and poofed out hair that looked like a dirty rug. It's not as if hygiene is that important in the middle of a desolate salt flat, but when you feel like shit it doesn't help with your confidence.

So I sat in the shade of the Wood Pussy tent with Erich after Michele went off to find her brother. At around mid-day, some friends wandered by with a pleathora of recreational pharmecuticals to sample, one of which was 5-MAO DMT.

5-MAO was supposed to be like Super DMT. According to Don it was supposed to take you...literally...to another dimension for about five minutes. Various folks who had tried it had assured him that it was the most intense drug they had ever taken. I had heard this talk about regular DMT from Terence Mckenna and the *Mondo 2000* staff, but ended up trying it on two occasions with disappointing results. No interdimensional elves talking about the end of time. No travels through hyperspace to the future. Just mild prismatic hallucinations. And I took a BIG hit both times.

I asked my friend what the possible physical side effects were, as anyone who partakes in drug experimentation should, (unless you're Hunter S. Thompson) and he just grinned and said:

"Well...You could die!"

That was it. No thanks for me. I didn't want the last words I ever heard in my life to be this guy chuckling to himself saying: "Uh Oh...He doesn't look so good!" No offense to this guy, who I respect as a musician and a writer, but I didn't want him to be my potential harbinger of death.

Erich, on the other hand, was totally in to it. So he sat in the Wood Pussy U-Haul and took a hit of the 5-MAO DMT. His features went flush, he spasmed slightly, and sank back into a stupor. Then he got up and barfed.

He said it was so indescribably intense that I needed to try it. Maybe next year, Erich. Still, it did take balls to do what he did, and I have to give Erich props for throwing caution to the wind and giving the stuff a try.

We then went over to central camp and saw Three Day Stubble play a fantastic show and I ran into my friend Mike Vague, who was also a close friend of my girlfriend back home. I told him things weren't working out too well and he smiled at me and said: "Howard, you're both warriors. Remember that."

The whole 5-MAO thing earlier that afternoon made me kind of eager to do some sort of mind-altering chemical that night. Since Al was going to be blowing up Tinseltown, I decided Saturday would be better to Shroom than Sunday. The actual Burning Man being set on fire would probably be like last year, too crowded and impossible to get close to. It's all about the events before and after that make the festival so cool. So I ate a whole 8th of mushrooms myself as the sun went down and went into the deepest pits of Hell.

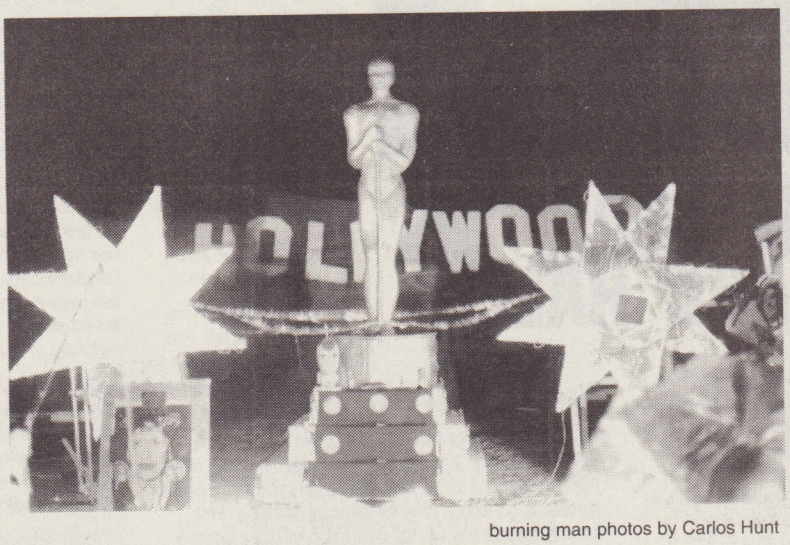
The mock buildings set up by HELLCO were blaring rock music as the Devil took to the podium. The structures began to catch fire along with numerous fast food logos as Satan screamed to the gathering crowds:

"ON YOUR KNEES! THOSE THAT HAVE NOT YET SOLD THEIR SOULS!!! LINE UP!! ON YOUR KNEES!!! BOW IN OBEDIENCE!!!"

Rich Polysorbate's mix tape of subliminal shrieks began blaring from Tinseltown as Reverend Al and crew began setting movie star effigies fire. The Hollywood sign went up in huge explosions of light, and it was like a living nightmare. Someone began blaring a Hitler speech and I thought "Fuck all this bullshit" to myself and started to walk away. I was tripping now and all I could see were demons, fire, and cracked earth. The dark Satanic imagery was intended to be ironic (I guess). Kind of a commentary on the Capitalist system, but that's not how I was seeing it then.

To me, in my state, this was some serious shit going down.

I was separated from anyone I knew and began walking aimlessly trying to find either a friend or my campsite. It was weird, but neither one could be found. No matter what direction I walked in, I always ended up going back to HELLCO and Tinseltown. This started to scare the shit out of me and all of a sudden I realized the weight of my situation. Sinister forces were at work here. I had wandered into a Satanic Fire Ritual filled to the gazooks with real live demons and this whole Burning Man thing was a giant evil conspiracy even the most paranoid bible thumping crusader could not fathom in its depth and scale. In the years before, the vibe was very positive and not directly related to any type of religious imagery, but this year it truly was the Hell that those fire and brimstone preachers go on about. My



burning man photos by Carlos Hunt

fear escalated to terror as the explosions grew larger and the monsters grew more horrifying. Even the lights of Michael Gump's Bug Van were taken over by unrecognizable faces of people who looked only half human.

My canteen, which I had been drinking from liberally, began to taste like dust. There seemed to be no escape. No relief. No end. No hope. No possibility of salvation. I would have to endure the dark night of the soul.

My friend Ed was telling me about an acid trip he had where he felt that not only could people around him read his mind, but he felt they were fucking with his thoughts and judging him for each one he had. This is exactly how I felt. Like everyone around me could see my mind like an open book, and they were repulsed. Disgusted. Laughing at me like I was the worst human being alive. There were looks of absolute disdain that I swore I saw, and I heard Chicken John say over the loud speaker:

"SOMEONE JUST DIED! DON'T YOU HAVE ANY RESPECT?!? DON'T YOU HAVE ANY FEELINGS?!?"

He was probably referring to one of the celebrity effigies that Reverend Al had just ignited, but that's not how I took it. I just thought about my poor Grandpa and knew this was all about me.

In retrospect, any experienced user of psychedelics would probably tell you that the reason for this bad trip was due to the fact that I was not transcending my ego and this was why I was reflecting all this shit back onto myself. But like my friend Tim Leary once said, that's why "set and setting" are so important. If at all possible, make sure you're in a good place physically and emotionally before you trip or you run the risk of this type of shit happening. Mentally, I was feeling very depressed being in an unhealthy relationship and being broke. Life sucked and I had a lot on my mind. Not the time to do Mushrooms. As far as the physical environment, Burning Man had always proven to be great in the past, despite the intense conditions. But the overkill of Satanic themes this year was not helping whatsoever in easing my mind.

This is all rationalizing the irrational, though. At the time it was happening, reason was not an option. It was Hell. The alienation I felt in the sea of distorted faces drove me to nearly doing myself in. It was relentless...entering my thoughts and my memories like a hungry parasite that grew with my guilt and fear. In those hours I knew what it was to be damned.

Finally, after what seemed to be years of torture, I ran into Wes and he very calmly walked me back over to my tent where Justin gave me a cigarette and Krista gave me a big hug. I had felt like I had found home again. Safety. But the terror remained. It had seemed so real. Too real. I had even prayed for salvation. Tried everything from reciting The Shema to Psalm 23. It's funny how you find religion so easily when the bad shit goes down.

On Sunday we went for breakfast at the restaraunt in Gerlach and then took showers at a deserted swimming pool facility for $3.00. We got back around dusk and drove over to the Piano sculpture composed of dozens upon dozens of fucked up pianos stacked on top of each other. People were banging them with sticks and creating a crazed racket of noise.

Back at camp I dressed for the annual Cacophony Cocktail Party and drank a strong vodka mixed with grenadine as the sun slowly set. The drumming was beginning and the Man was close to meeting his end. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence were passing out pot brownies, but I decided to skip the offering after my little journey through Chapel Perilous the night before. I would only be mildly tipsy this year as Burning Man burned, which was fine with me.

The crowds were far away from the actual fire when the Burning Man was set ablaze, which I had predicted, but the neon skeleton that made up its frame changed from blue to yellow to red and a spectacular fireworks display was seen by all. It was still a good show. The usual climax of fires was much tamer this year after The Man fell, but perhaps that was due to the fact that I wasn't tripping.

Wood Pussy played a great set by the giant Mouse Trap game near Plundertown and they even did a cover of Bowie's "Moonage Daydream". It reminded me of when my old band played Burning Man back in 1994 and did a version of "Memory Of A Free Festival".

We made a huge fire with the help of these giant pieces of wood Chicken John somehow got ahold of, and sat around it contently reflecting on what had occured. By this time all my friends knew I had a really bad trip, and some were agreeing with me that the tremendous increase in the number of people, the negative Satan bullshit and the fact that some people died this year was beginning to change the feeling of the festival. Gus from *Flipside* swore he would never come back. But still, some first timers enjoyed it. Chris Graves, one of the designers of Tim Leary's web site, came by our fire and told me he had the time of his life. Just goes to show that one person's Hell is another person's Heaven.

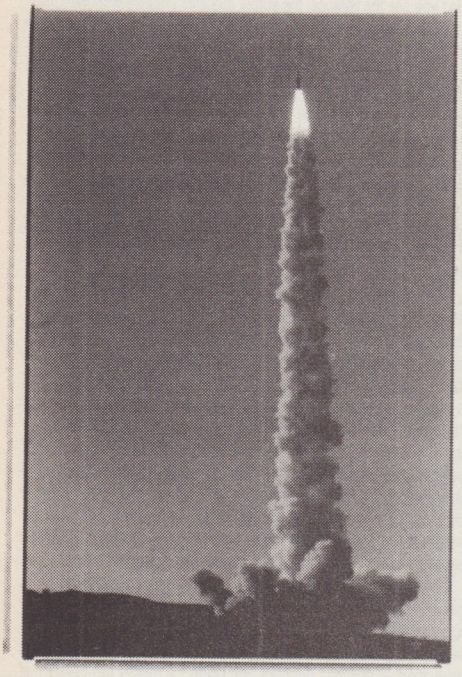
Will I return? Shit, I've been going to Burning Man now for five years. If I make it through ten, all these trips will make a pretty good book. As far as whether or not I'm gonna trip out there again...that remains to be seen. I'm not so eager to again experience the tortures of the damned. It kind of fucks up your vacation.

Reverend Al and the rest of the folks I traveled up with decided to stay an extra day, so I drove back with Kathy and Sally. We stopped for the traditional Peppermill buffet in Reno and then it was back to LA. Back to my job, my crabby girlfriend, my piece of shit apartment and all the other little hells I had left behind.

✦ ✦ ✦

Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Howard Hallis R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn.

WIN, PLACE, OR SHOW REVIEWS



OZZFEST @ Blockbuster Pavilion

Yellow is the color that security wears at the Glen Helen Blockbuster Pavilion, in DeVore, California. My Gore-Tex Patogonia windbreaker (it's windy today) is a "mango" light orange, but still makes me look like a narc. I couldn't have planned it better, had I planned. We're sort of in the middle of nowhere, where the mountains meet the desert out by San Bernadino. There are 35,000 of us, communing in our love of metal under a starry sky. I'm on the graveyard lawn, which is, as might be expected, neither. No tombs here, unless you count the general population, a various, but uniformly motley, crew. This is what I've snuck into the Ozzfest: a camera, a water bottle, a sandwich, and a knife. This is the trick – bring your knitting. Knitters are not known for making trouble, though the young woman who searched my bag tells me not to knit near security – the needles could be mistaken for talons of death. There are, according to a pair of red-faced, buzz-cutted yellow jackets, three organized mosh pits in the lawn section of the Blockbuster Pavilion. Ozzy Osbourne hockey jerseys cost $75, t-shirts are only $30. No one seems to know what's going on, or maybe it doesn't really matter. They howl, headbang, and then turn to their neighbor and say "I'm sure this is Slayer," when obviously it's Sepultura, playing hits off their current album "Roots" - almost note for note. Sepultura is the best band of the century. I meet Gene and his friend Rob. They are shivering in their black t-shirts, and are here to see Ozzy, whom, I tell them is too old to rock. They say I look like a "school girl with a rock attitude" and ask how many times I've seen Ozzy already. Gene has seen him three times. They want to know if this is my first concert. "Not exactly." "Have you seen Judas Priest?"

The final frontier of the graveyard lawn is marked by a line of port-o-lets, 70 on one side and 66 on the other. Between these batches of facilities are tents where one can buy margaritas, beer, peanuts, sausages, and souvenirs. Because no one wears yellow to a metal show, security stands out like the center lane on a freshly resurfaced asphalt road. They always wear yellow I'm told, even for events that might attract a more pastel crowd. Perhaps the diminished contrast is not a problem. A light color-wearing mob may be more serene than these black-clad mutant metalheads. I sit Danzig out, because I'd rather knit. I wander through one of the two villages set up to service this event. There is one area called "Brain Machine" where loud Black Sabbath plays and concert-goers sit quietly on folding chairs wearing sunglasses. These have been retro-fitted to include pulsing green and red lights on the inside. The wearers are transfixed and very calm. Had I wanted any man at the Blockbuster Pavilion that night (but I didn't) I had the power, in Saran Wrap, at the bottom of my backpack. During Danzig (and I was starting to feel sort of guilty for not even giving him a chance) I took out my fabulous turkey sandwich and neatly sliced it in half with my smuggled in picnic knife, putting one half back for later and chomping right into half #1, which contained, in order of appearance: Swiss cheese, turkey pastrami, golden roasted turkey breast, cucumber, tomato, avocado and mustard, on toasted rye bread. One young man, drippy eyeliner, black army jacket, knit cap, is overwhelmed by the vision of this sandwich. "You're one in a million," he says to me. "I know." Obviously, he wasn't worth the reserve half, which remained in the bag.

There are people building bonfires, there are people getting sick, practicing their death metal vocal skills, drinking beer, eating sausage, big guys beating up fags, vixens trying to get backstage and everybody, generally, seems freezing cold in the wind and chill night air. "How many of you," asks Slayer, "dance with the devil in your dreams?" The question is asked rather unenthusiastically and the audience response is dismal. There is little excitement on the graveyard lawn for Slayer, who is giving a pretty uninspired set, some songs off of the new album, and older, dragging numbers. The highlight, their final song, "Angel of Death," sets off quite a commotion. A fat guy in snow-camo is down, security is everywhere all of a sudden, and the rumor is that it's us against them now, we're finally going to get "the man," show him what's what, whatever. So fifty sheriffs show up wearing gas masks, tear gas, couldn't have asked for a better soundtrack, and in the ensuing exodus of cops and guards, my yellow jacket finally counts for something and I leave the lawn behind and head confidently for the amphitheater. I don't want to get busted and thrown back to the savages, so I make friends quickly, with two characters who show me the celebrity autograph they just scored on their ticket stub. Ron Jeremy. He was on the phone. Perfect. Enter Ozzy, hard rock's cheerleader. I had thought that Blockbuster was a Christian corporation, but there's the original bad boy, complete with buckets of blood and video footage of his infamous bat-chomping escapades. He's precise and energetic and overwhelmingly cheerful. He welcomes the audience to sing along. They know every word, but I'm told later that he gets the lyrics displayed on his own personal teleprompter. Maybe it's senility, or maybe it's the weather. Either way, it's embarrassing information. He encourages the Bic salute, difficult with the wind and the new breed of childproof lighters. Ozzy sings all the hits: "War Pigs," "Sweetleaf," "Paranoid," "Mr. Crowley," "Suicide Solution," and then he says he'll do one more tune if the audience promises to go "fucking crazy, crazier than you've ever been in your entire fucking lives." He launches into "Crazy Train" and the fence in front of me collapses in a sea of joy. Security is pissed and another melee follows. I left during the first encore, "Mama I'm Coming Home," because I'd already heard all my favorites and the thought of him potentially breaking into "Changes" was too much for me to bear. (Lisa Anne Auerbach)

FRANCESCA LIA BLOCK @ Borders Books

The last time I wrote a fan letter to an author was in 6th grade telling Judy Blume how great I thought *Are You There God?...It's Me Margaret* was on my rainbow stationary. In return from Judy I received a form letter/booklet printed with glossy snapshots. So when I received a hand-written postcard from Francesca Lia Block (which mentioned in passing the book-reading she was giving) in response to a silly, gushing fan letter I wrote, I looked forward to the event. Her books (juvenile fiction mostly) are written in the most envelopingly sensory sensual style, often about how magical it is to live in Los Angeles. She was absolutely adorable reading from her newest book, *Girl Goddess #9* in her pink Jackie O suit, multi-colored neon nail polish, and black fishnets. At the book signing afterwards, I was so enamored that I stammered all over myself and could barely hand her the stack of *Ben* back issues I'd brought for her (as she had also written that her next project is a non-fiction book about zines co-authored with Hillary Carlip who wrote *Girl Power*). I dare anyone who tries to dis LA, (or anyone in search of a modern-day fairy tale) to read her books. (Lorraine)

Spoken Word Is Its Own Punishment
(**BUTTER** @ the Troubador)
—a show review by Nina La Tina

Rolled up to the full-grown Troubador
Sidekickin' my girl Darby
Packed in was the whole Grand Royal Corp
All I could think was I had to pee.
Comin' downstairs hit by a funked up beat
Buffalo Daughter with their stuff to strut
Nippon waxin', the ol' samplin' off the street
Eyes glazed, fixed on Moog shaking mean butt.
Lights dimmin' again, crowd kickin' panic attack
Butter 08 burst on the stage
Furious & furry, induced a kiddie flashback
Past punk rock to Banana Split watchin' days
2 wigs licking guitars far from my G spot
Cibo onnas did try wickedly to conspire
Rus Sim, the bad-ass drummer, I like a lot
To be a vocalist he did sadly aspire
Weeks later, tripping down Lower East of NYC
Out of a Korean market Simins did saunter
Eyes met, I was struck with a large epiphany
If only he was Eddie Jones, Laker king baller
Then maybe we'd have seen a show worth the holler

THE ANTI-HEROS @ the Whiskey

I first saw them at the Foothill club in Long Beach. It was a calm, relaxed show. There was virtually no pit action going on. Everyone just enjoyed it. The Anti-Heros put on a great show, but I decided to wait till they played at the Whiskey to review them thinking there might be a bit more energy from the audience. Dumb idea.

Lots of squatter punks and others who usually don't spend their money on anything else but beer, actually bought pre-sale tickets so I knew it would be crowded. When someone said there may be a riot I doubted it because out of the 11 years I have gone to shows I have never attended one that was shut down (it always happened at the one the night before or after). I even mentioned how I wanted to see one – that was a stupid comment I know now.

So, I'm at the Whiskey and already two bands played and The Revolt were late to go on. People are drunk and are waiting for the Anti-Heros. The Whiskey's first mistake was to add two extra bands making it five total which is too many for this kind of show. The second was there was no security in front of the stage. Since the Revolt were late they could only play a few songs, but were allowed to play one extra during which a small fight broke out while the band played on. When the song ended they tried to play more, but got cut off. I saw the guitarist push the sound guy when the sound guy pulled the guitar cord out, and security rushed the stage. (Perhaps my view led me to the wrong conclusions, others say security started the brawl which is usually closer to the truth.) Then the fight in the pit gets bigger and it goes on stage too. The guitarist swings at the security guard, but doesn't hit him. As far as I've been told, the security took him out back, held the door closed, and beat the fuck out of him 'till he was lying in a pool of his own blood. So I hear. So then the fighting moves towards the door and I think some who were fighting threw others outside and held the door closed on them. Then skins inside started to kick the door open when Mark, the singer of The Anti-Heros, got on stage and tried to stop it: "Look, we've come 3000 miles to play, can you wait 'till after we're done? We don't want to get involved in your politics, we just want to play and have some fun." Then they kicked the door open and everyone in the audience yelled for them to wait to continue the brawl after the show. Unfortunately the next thing you see is a trash can flying through the air – and I was officially attending my first closed down show. Ofcourse shutting down the event was The Whiskey's (third major error) and a small riot ensued. If they had just continued on, all would have been fine. Then upstairs a security guard shot off a gun without even looking. Everyone ran downstairs and the security started kicking people outside where there was real bloody fighting going on. Inside a group of people cornered the security upstairs, throwing shit at them, while the security hid upstairs. The place was a mess. Finally everyone went outside, but I stayed inside with the band

and the other Taang! people. When the police came in with their riot gear on they ordered us outside or else. Outside there was an ambulance and about 10 cop cars lined up and down Sunset Blvd., but all the fighting was over. It's ironic that the Anti-Heros can play a show in their hometown of Atlanta, Georgia with no trouble yet in L.A. the fans still think they're in the wild west. (And regardless of what KROQ says, the Anti-Heros had nothing to do with it.) But since the Whiskey charges a band $42 for a case of beer that you could get at any liquor store for $20, maybe they deserve to get their asses kicked. I personally saw no blood, but I *did* see my first really stupid, wasteful, fucked-up show. I'll take the calm concert where I actually get to see a good band play any day. And the Anti-Heros are definitely one of those bands. (Selina)

BLUES EXPLOSION @ The Palace

Why are the Blues Explosion "rock stars"? Because they look better on stage then they do in person (though they ain't *too* shabby in person neither)?; because they have lots of friends in high places?; because they've got their hands in many over-boiling pots of hipness?; because Jon Spencer's whole gimmick is rock star, and he is so damn good he has become it?! When the Blues Explosion played the Palace however long ago, they went wild out on stage without much explosion. It was a let-down after that big record that the band seemed so small up there. When Jack Zinder got them to Fuzzyland the next night to blow our minds, I got the notion their power was only able to be experienced in a more contained space – where they could more easily fill every nook and cranny. To fill that big Palace space successfully you need big band powerhouse, stacks of Marshalls – or something more. Finally they've attained it, whatever it is. Ascending another level of rock star-dom; replacing the excess of "Blues Explosion" wails, which used to fill in the gaps, with something more concrete. Unlike most who perform on the large stage and spread out to occupy the space – making it seem as if the players just met or are sick of each other – the Blues Explosion keep it tight, literally; the band and all of their equipment filling up maybe 1/3 of the stage, front and center. The energy tense and compressed just like it must be before any good explosion. That they weren't so wild didn't matter, the slow flowin' songs were the highlight anyway…and watching Judas dance to them. The celeb fest jam session at the end with the members of the opening band, blues oldie RL Burnside, was sorta a touching passing of the baton, *but in the meantime let's get down to business.* And how could I possibly forget to mention Weird Al (who just directed one of their videos) – decked out in Hawaiian shirt and multi-colored Van's of course – making an on-stage appearance during the sorta weak "Cat's Claw" song, which no matter how hard they were fighting it made all the Blues boys break out in smile. (Ju-ji)

ROCKET LAUNCH @ Vandenberg Airforce Base

There is nothing a girl likes better than a rocket launch. Half a million pounds of thrust, with strap on boosters and a pillar of flame that just won't quit. I watched the Titan IV blast off from Vandenberg AFB on December 20 at 10:04 a.m. My rocket enthusiast friend and I had gotten up at 4, driven three hours to Lompoc, and then waited around with a bunch of 30th Space Wing dudes in camo and some press geeks with huge lenses. We ate regulation Air Force donuts and asked the public relations folks from the National Reconnaissance Office all sorts of questions that they outright refused to answer. It was enough of a milestone to have announced the deployment of a spy satellite, instead of covering it up like they usually did. Beyond that, all details were anyone's guess. More specifically, they were "classified." Around 10 o'clock, everyone stopped chewing their donuts and went over to their tripods and were all of a sudden silent. We were 5.1 miles from the launch pad on a grassy patch overlooking the ocean. A very quiet radio in someone's jacket pocket started the familiar countdown, as we peered at the 20 stories tall rocket, which from where we stood, looked like a toy. Right after the voice said, "Blast off," the smoke and fire started pouring out of the bottom of the thing and then it just shot up straight and steady. It was strangely quiet until about 25 seconds later, when the rocket's rumble reached where we stood and I felt the ground shake. The Titan IV continued to climb until it changed course and was hidden behind a veil of its own smoke. There was no instant replay and no inane commentary. We watched as the rocket smoke dispersed and filled up the sky to look like regular old clouds. Then we got in the car and drove home. (Lisa Anne Auerbach)

MAZZY STAR @ The Palace

As a rule, The Palace is lacking in the sort of regal comfort its name implies and certainly the sort of comforts I am accustomed to – it is probably the worst place I can think of to see a show. There are too many reasons to waste the energy to enumerate right now, but the main offense is that the shows there always start way too early so it is almost next to impossible to see an opening band there or even the start of the set of the headliner. So of course, it was not my fault in the least that when I showed up there at 9ish, Mazzy Star had already been playing for 10 or 15 minutes. Or should I say they were already in full bloom. I pushed past the usual Palace riff raff towards unobstructed enjoyment of what was left of the set. Not that there was really anything to see – a few rays from a blue sometimes red spotlight slowly roamed the otherwise black stage filled with smoke further screening out the shadowed figures on stage – but the overall effect was near mesmerizing and combined with the deep warmth of their heavy, heavy sound I was soon taken far, far away from the Palace to a place I really, really wanted to be. (nina la queena)

KOMEDA & the **SUGARPLASTIC** @ Spaceland

So who could pass up a chance to see the forerunners of the Swedish invasion? Komeda came on stage all dressed in white like big piles of vanilla marshmallow cream frosting, and they sounded just as sweet. From the haunting organist to the guitarist who thought that he was in Oasis, it was all about trance carousel melody. The Sugarplastic gave them an energetic run for their money, as the locals weren't about to be out-popped in their own backyard. When I first heard their album, I foolishly wrote it off as sounding like XTC, but after the first time I saw them perform live awhile back, I couldn't get their tunes outta my head. Now it's one of the disks that lives permanently in my CD player; definitely some of the most intricate power-pop around. All in all, the music this night was so sugary sweet (coupled with the Shirley Temples I kept drinking) that I had to keep running to the bathroom – toothbrush in hand. (Lorraine)

CHOKEBORE @ Jabberjaw

Chokebore, my new favorite band played. They just got back into town from a U.S./Paris tour and I'm a privileged type of groupie who gets the information from the singer, Troy, late the night before. The night when he also tells me I can be the president of their fan club when I ask politely. Since they've become my favorite band I've been waiting almost patiently to see them play live – with the thought of how many times over the years I missed their local LA shows gnawing at my petty little mind. I actually used to make fun of this band, the only thing I knew about them being their name change from Dana Lynn to Chokebore, at the request of Tom Hazelmeyer of AmRep as a prerequisite to signing them to his label – you know, the *manly* label ("Dana Lynn" is *not* manly). This is right around the time their now almost forgotten band Helmet was being manly all across the globe, and one word band titles were all the rage! ha. But Chokebore sounded so contrived – or so it seemed, and I decided not to listen to them because I saw this as weak character (whata brat!).

But in the meantime this band could care less and happened to become a great band and so what could I do? It was mere chance I ever placed the thing in my CD player. And actually after my first skip through I didn't think much of it. I told my friend Lisa who is friends with one of them that it sucked hard – "wimpy" I might have called it. Within a week she came over and I played it, and found myself defending them against her "they used to be hardcore" comments. "But, don't you see the balance, the subtle qualities crashed with the throbbing dissonance. They're still hardcore." "But they used to be *totally* hardcore." We flipped through song after song and I notice she had about as much patience as I the first time listening through. When she departed still unconvinced, I was left to deliberate my defense of them. I played them over and over without reaching for that fast-forward button, taking in the essence, reveling in my new found hope…and by the time we went away for our zine tour this summer it was my personal soundtrack. Chokebore vibrations were all that could penetrate the brutal jarring that the Winnebago, and the whole tour, left me with. It's the least I can say that this band saved my life by buffering me and giving me – a girl who hasn't found love in music for long enough to wonder – a little bit of hope.

So in the meantime, Chokebore is playing at two places I usually don't jump at the chance to attend: Jabberjaw and the Viper room (okay, Jabberjaw *is* that bad). I know it is a symbol of my sins against the band years before – and I'm not even religious – and my going to these establishments will serve as a form of repentance that I shall humbly acquiesce to. I have not stepped foot in Jabberjaw for over three years, but this time there was no Nyler at the door to tell me I wasn't on anyone's list even though I'd catch sight of my name as he'd be pretending to look through them; and I didn't have to stand by the door waiting for someone from the band to yell at him for being a slimeball either; and no one looked like they were doing much heroin, albeit I'm not a good judge; and I actually found myself missing the sweet scent of cat pee since I don't have a cat of my own anymore….

The first band (name easily forgotten), I couldn't jive with, though the singer's John Hughes-esque '80s style dancing was a joy to behold. We waited. I was there with my pal Lorraine, telling her her favorite rock star might come to see this band even though it was more than exceedingly doubtful. But being my money girl Friday – at home and on tour – she has listened to Chokebore's "Anything Near Water" CD by incidence at least half as many times as I, so she has her own type of appreciation for them.

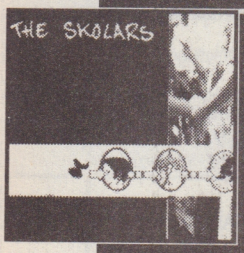
And then it's time. Without my glasses on I see Troy's lips contort and he makes a paused operatic drama face (sorta distant cousin to Shudder), while workin' an underwater jig with his guitar that is awfully sexy. He sings from all angles of the microphone and his agitated movements make my stomach feel like it does when someone is stuttering and I want to jump in and help them finish their sentence. I close my eyes and it's fluid; so I decide to flip back and forth from having my eyes open or closed to balance myself. The rest of the band pounds away – each knee deep in their own world.

Some drunken boob is on Lorraine's back and some jerky alterna-jock boys are egging him on. I'd fight for my girl, but since she could probably kick anyone's ass it is only a gesture of affection. I think about a few fancy martial arts maneuvers I've recently learned and want desperately to try out. I look for back-up and only see Evan Mack by the coffee bar and wonder if he'd come and help us out if we needed it.

"Lemonade" gets interrupted by a phone call. Mr. Lead Guitar ist the only one who stops playing though, until the rest of the band real-

→reviews continued on page 109→

CARGO RECORDS AMERICA



skolars
ten songs & then some

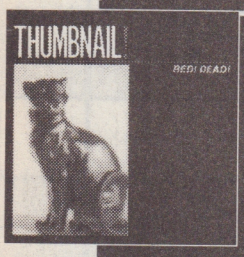
Long-awaited debut straight outta Detroit, prod by "Me n' Al" of Down By Law/Everclear fame. Ten trx of high-powered skate punk ska, plus phone pranks and crazed groupie messages.
Jump Up! Cd

exceptions
five finger discount

New album from rockin' ska feat on Misfits of Ska & American Skathic series. Ten trx of crunching third wave ska sounds, giving the Bosstones a run for it!
Jump Up! Cd

boys' life
departures and landfalls

Boys' Life is Headhunter to the core. Jehu meets Chune meets Three Mile Pilot. Recorded by Bob Weston.
Headhunter Cd/Lp



thumbnail
red! dead!

Unwound meets Angel Hair meets Clickatat Ikatowi. Recorded by Mark Trombino of Jehu.
Headhunter Cd/Lp

vitamade
everything you need

Flying Cows, Chaos, Turbulence. You must be this tall to.ride.
Bong Load Cd

Cargo Records America

1525 W. Homer 773.772.6005
Chicago, IL 60622 773.772.5344 *fax*

Sales dial **2**, Dance Dept. dial **3**, Buyers dial **4**

SELL YOUR MUSIC
with custom promo cards!

Full Color Promo Cards
$95
500 copies

Promote Record Releases & New Bands • Great For Recording & Sound Studios • Feature Musical Instruments & Accessories • Perfect For Trade Shows, Special Events, Promotions & More! • Call **Now** For More Information & A Free Sample Kit!

Modern Postcard
1-800-959-8365

Gritty Punk-Funk from one of New York's seminal bands

Bush Tetras

-Page 18-

New slimline CD out now including bonus tracks "Satan Is A Bummer" and "Find A Lie". 7" single also available. Full-length CD in stores Feb. '97

Tim/Kerr

644 850 139-2 Tim/Kerr Records P.O. Box 42432 Portland, OR 97242 644 850 139-7

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

ARTIST	TITLE, FORMAT, LABEL	Record Report Card	Cover Art Grade	POPPY	HEAVY	PUNK RK	COLOR	FOOD	Totem Animal Spirit	sex act	Remind me of what TV show/movie/ book	friends w/ Wesley Willis
7 Year Bitch	Miss Understood, 7", Man's Ruin	A-	A+		•		dark choc truffle	chocolate frosting	catty	scratching	Faster Pussycat, Kill Kill Kill	•
Amorphis	Elegy, CD, Relapse	A+	A	•	•		icy blue	lutefisk	meow	none needed	something on A&E	•
Andy Prieboy	Sin of Our Fathers, CD, Doctor Dream	D	D	•			brownish green dirty lake color	regurgitated baby peas	donkey	sucking on fungus-infected toes	Dukes of Hazzard meets Hee Haw meets Rocky Horror	•
Anti-Heros	American Pie, CD, Taang!	B	A			•	brown	meatloaf	part lab part pitbull	anything as long as it is done by a male & a female	All in the Family	•
Baby Gopal	[self-titled], CD, Victory	C	C	•	•		light blue	cold cold pasta	blue jay	69	Melrose Place	•
Benna	Greetings From Port Authority, CD, Evil Teen	C	C	•			pink					•
Black Tape For A Blue Girl	Remnants of a Deeper Purity, CD, Projekt	B-	C				wine	chocolate and vanilla swirl pudding	swan	loving, passionate sex with a dead fuck	Northern Exposure	•
Blind Melon	Nico, CD, Capitol	B+	N/A	•			stone-washed denim	sprig of hay	swamp 'gators	w/ live chickens	best little whorehouse in New Orleans	•
Bottom Feeders, The	Big Six, CD, Scooch Pooch	B+	B+	•		•	red	Beer	roadkill	who has time?	Studs	•
Brendon Benson	One Mississippi, CD, Virgin	B	B	•			yellow	quiche	butterfly			•
Bubby Girl	My Own Pet, CD, Boom Berneatha	D-	D-				peuce	Sprouts and Alpo	chia pet	can't get laid	Blossom	•
Bug Guts	Big Bowl of Warm Fur, CD, Vinyl Comm	C	C				black	steak	snake	fisting	Wild Kingdom	•
Buttsteak	Men Who Pause, CD, Go-kart	A-	C+	•	•	•	the primary three	marshmellow bunnies		back door men	the x-files	•
Chokebore	A Taste 4 Bitters, CD, Amphetamine Reptile	A-	E		•		nite sky in rain	sushi & saki	Crustacean		Polanski & Fitzgerald	•
Chrome Cranks	Love In Exile, CD, Matador	B	B+		•		taxi cab yellow	bagels	mangey dog	hickies		•
Crown Heights	Dear Sir, 7", Trance/Emperor Jones	B	B	•	•		grey	burrito	cat	kiss		• •
Dahlia Seed	Survived By, CD, Troubleman Unlimited	B	B-			•	Titanium	Vichyssoise	Winnie the Pooh	Missionary – but satisfying!	10,000 Leauges Under The Sea	•
Dead Can Dance	Spiritchaser, CD, 4AD	D	C				yellow	mush	lizzard	would never get that far	The Serpent and the Rainbow	•
Devo	Adventures of the Smart Patrol, CD, Discovery	B+	C+				lime	jello	a free range chicken	riding the red eye express	Square Pegs	•

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

Obviously signed pact w/ devil	At Least Can Play	(Might B) Better w/ banjo	GIMMICK	(Might B) good live	Their polar Opposite	Address	Once Upon a Time...	REVIEWER
made the devil sign with them			riot grrrls	•	Jennie Garth	2415 3rd St. suite 239 San Francisco, CA 94107	For years I've avoided all things riot grrrl, but I liked this in spite of myself; really dug side B. Definately the best cover-booklet I've seen (Kozik did it) w/ cherry-red vinyl to boot.	Lo
No	•		Based on Finnish National Poetry	•	Sebadoh	PO Box 251 Millersville, PA 17551	There was a fairy princess who lived in a log cabin at the edge of a lake.	AA
•		•		only if you're wearing spurs & a cowboy hat	anything good	841 W. Collins, Orange, CA 92667	There was a boy crawling through the catacombs and he stubbed his knee on a rock. He then cried for 8 hours and turned it into a song.	S
			good old American street punk	yes, if audience would kindly fight after the show	liberals	706 Pismo ct. San Diego, Ca.92109	There was a cool group of guys who wanted to express their frustrations of America. Some people got the wrong idea and called them nazi skins.	S/M
	•		girl singer	•	Duane Eddy	The Valley	Our band had an ugly guy singer and we hated looking at his ass, so we fired him and got a girl with a nice ass.	C
			Love		Black Flag	Tower Records, Sunset	I had a bad relationship & decided to make a career out of it.	C
			basic slow gothic	it would be like doing heroin	tubing down a roaring river	box 1591 Garden Grove, CA 92642-1591	I was walking through the grass, the birds were chirping, the trees were swaying. I put my blanket down and layed upon it. As I looked at the clouds and their changing formations, I fell asleep, my mouth opened and I started to drool.	S/M
	•	banjo enchantment attempted	dead lead singer	Hee Haw!	Nico	call information for Capitol Records	the sun swept across the soft underbelly of the white sky, found a slit, & radiantly burst through. A sparrow's crystal wing flashed as it flew by....(their lives R all mangled and messed, but here U R juggling clever little descriptions...)	N
•	•	•	straight on Punk	•	Flotsam	Scooch Pooch Records, 323 Broadway Ave E 3405 Seattle, WA 98102	My countertop was a disaster. 5 parties in so many days had left my hair unmanagable & the kitchen a Superfund cleanup site. Thankfully, all this didn't matter. Deep Six Liquors was right around the corner & I was on a date w/ destiny.	AA
or someone worse	i guess	•••	pretending to be Jonathan Richman's little brother		Buffy St. Marie	338 N. Foothill Beverly Hills, CA 90210	Very slick (while trying to seem un-slick) when they they might have benefitted from being less so. Pop geek-rock that if you think sounds Jellyfish-esque, it's because their guitarist had a hand in half the album.	Lo
•		NO! They already have a washboard!	I can't figure that out	NO!	NWA	P. O. Box 5873 Irvine, CA 92716		JJ
•	•		disturbed	•	Dwight Twilley	Downtown	I flunked out of Art school and became very bitter towards the world.	C
	•	crying for it		•		POB 20 Princeton Station NYC, NY 10012	Well boys and girls, sometimes when you pick out an album strictly because the band name repulses you, it pays off!	Lo
hmmmm			makes me crazy	•	celibacy	2645 1st Ave. S, Minn., MN 55408	darby fell in love with a CD and from then on wrote about the band in every issue of her zine.	d
no, but they'd like to	the drummer can		the name says it all	•	Breakfast at Tiffany's	POB 136 Cooper Station NYC 10276	There was a band that sometimes played faster songs (which rocked) and also slower songs (which put you to sleep). They had heart-beat drums throughout both types.	Lo
	•	•	they rock	•		PO Box	I was hungry, contemplated bagels and forgot for a few minutes that I was famished	C
	•		Chick Singer	•	Parliament	16 Willow Street Bayonne, NJ 07002		JJ
	•	couldn't hurt	spiritual			POB 461599 L.A., CA. 90046-9599	A group of people got together in the Andees moutains. They made music w/ their asses & it sounded like the jungle. It brought forth rain, therefore it rained asses for 70 days & we're not talking burros. (Despite all this they're still 1 of my fav bands)	S
at least w/ his minions	•	interesting possibility	they're DEVO	U could see Don Knotts Overdrive instead		2034 Broadway Santa Monica, CA 90404	There was a totally far out new wave band who rocked the '80s. Said band went on to do various multi-media projects and commercial endorsements, and now, this CD-rom soundtrack (the rest of this CD just being re-releases).	Lo

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

ARTIST	TITLE, FORMAT, LABEL	Record Report Card	Cover Art Grade	POPPY	HEAVY	PUNK RK	COLOR	FOOD	Totem Animal Spirit	sex act	Remind me of what TV show/movie/ book	friends w/ Wesley Willis
Digger	Powerbait, CD, Hopeless	C-	C	•			brown	mayonaise	sheep	blumpy	Our House	•
Duotang	Smash Ships & Raise Beams, CD, Mint	B	B	•	•		Red	Burgers	Lizard	Head	Mad TV	•
Dura Delinquent	[self-titled], CD, Echostatic	C	C				purple	fast food	rat	squeezing	COPS	•
Elevator to Hell	Parts 1-3, CD, Sub Pop	B	C-				sky blue	mushroom	racoon	cheating on your girlfriend	Andy Griffith Show	•
Exotic Sounds of Martin Denny	Forbidden Island & Primitiva, CD, Scamp	A	A-				mango	papaya	tiki god	hot tub	Fantasy Island	•
Frente	Shape, CD, Mammoth	B	F	•			cold water washed brights	organic	Sybil	lesbian threesome	Women on the Verge of Nervous breakdown	•
Gas Huffer	Inhuman Ordeal Of Special Agent, Epitaph	C	B-			•	transparent	bread and water	Chelsea Clinton	finger fuck	Fantasy Island	•
Gavin Friday	Shag Tobacco, CD, Island	A	C				aqua green	mint chip ice cream	panther	female orgasm	Natural Born Killers	•
Girl Toucher	Escape Shark Island, 7", Sugar Daddy	D+	B				white (men)	apple pie	bunny	teeth sucking	My 3 Sons	•
Godplow	Soft Formal Static, CD, Grass	C	D	•	•		tan	pizza	dog		Designing Women	•
Horace Pinker	Burn Tempe to the Ground, CD, One Foot	B	B	•	•	•	any manic panic	subs	rabid dog	hand job	Party of Five	•
Huntingtons, The	Sweet Sixteen, CD, Flying Tart	C	D	•			pink and green	okra	Buffy and Skip	going through your sister's underwear drawer	Animal House	•
John Cale	Artificial Intelligence, CD, Beggars Banquet	F	D+				What color is vomit?	garmenbosia	the beast from Beauty & the Beast		pick any Soap opera	•
Johny Vegas	Super Cool American, CD, Leprechaun	C-	B-				topaz		golden retriever		Northern Exposure	•
Jonathan Fire*eater	Tremble Under Boom Lights, CD, Medicine	B++	C	•	•		classic somethin	Fish 'n Chips & Chocolate chips	Nick Cave	unripe, unruly, unholy,undone, underwear	Go Ask Alice	•
KMFDM	Rules, Wax Trax, CD	F	D		•		orange	black sausage	Bull	tittie fuck	The Max	•
Lee Harvey Oswald Band, The	Blastronaut, CD, Touch & Go	D	B-				grassy knoll green	cheese puffs	ground hog	celibacy	My Favorite Martian	•
Lilys	Better Can't Make Your Life Better, CD, Primary	D+	D	•			sunflower yellow	scones with cream	Fergie	circle jerk	The Monkees	•
Lit	Five Smokin' Tracks From Lit, CD, Malicious Vinyl	C-	C	•			tan	boogers	Smokey the Bear	breastfeeding	Leave It to Beaver	•
Los Marauders	Every Song We Fuckin' Know, CD, Epitaph	C+	C-		•	•	newsprint beige	canned peas	a stray cat	lap dance	Gidget	•

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

Obviously signed pact w/ devil	At Least Can Play	(Might B) Better w/ banjo	GIMMICK	(Might B) good live	Their polar Opposite	Address	Once Upon a Time...	REVIEWER
		•	Green Day thing (sorta)		The Artist Formerly Known As Prince	P. O. Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409		JJ
	•		Bullshit free	•	Korn	Next door	I got lonely, smoked pot, went to the grocery store and forgot what I came for.	C
		•	Jon Spencer out of tune blues	•	Muddy Waters	East Village	It was cool to be out of tune, but now it's calculated and pathetic.	C
		•	Sub Pop band		Ween	POB 20645 Seattle, WA 98102	A good album to listen to lying in bed trying to sleep; insert bedtime story here.	Lo
	•		Hawaiian style from late '50s		death rock	104 W. 29th st 4th floor NYC, NY 10001	Right around the time Hawaii was admitted into the union as our 50th proud state, everybody went tiki crazy...	Lo
	•		weird girl singer	might be	The Osmands	101 B Street Carrboro, NC, 27510	She collapses on the grass, face down. An ant carries a sunflower seed shell on its back. She looks over at her boyfriend lying next to her. He's covered in blood, bright red, so beautiful. She reaches to touch him but can't find her hand.	N
•	•	•	Artsy: all dressed in black & wearing beanies	•	Cher	2798 Sunset Blvd., L.A., CA 90026		JJ
				would definatly be good live	painful cramps	825 Eighth Ave. NYC, NY 10019	There's no story, you just have to listen to it.	S
		yes	still looking for one		Mungo Jerry	34-16 Broadway Astoria, NY 11106	Regular boring white-guy bland-rock, and not in a good, campy, kitschy or anything entertaining kind of way either.	Lo
	•	•	safety belts	•	Biohazzard	College Town, USA	A man came and painted everything off-white and then everything could be distinguished nothing.	C
	•		Pop Punk	•	Palace	East Bay: Gilman St.	I came to terms with my own life and started using maximum R'n'R to line my birdcage and I don't even own a bird.	C
•			Clean cut , silly face makin' geeks		Poison Idea	P. O. Box 24904; Nashville, TN 37202		JJ
way back in the '60s		anything would help	ex-member of Velvet Underground	30 years ago	Crispin Glover	580 Broadway#1004 NYC, NY 10012	Such a "happening" guy in the '60s and '70s, such a synthesized nightmare in the '90s. Tom Waitsy at best; Peter Gabriel meets Michael Bolton meets Andrew Lloyd Weber at worst. Good night.	Lo
		surprised they don't have it already			Lounge	POB 806 Syracuse, NY 13206	Neo-hippie-folksy. A little bit country and a little bit alternarock'n'roll. Yawn.	Lo
yup			NY, cute, young, innocent?	R!	Mel Torme	175 5th Ave, #2299, NY 10010	someone caught a spark, between ages, between highs, and held onto it dearly because no one could be sure it would ever be felt again.	d
			wanabee industrial?	no way	amuse. park w/ cute boy & short lines	1657 N. Damen ave. Chicago, IL. 60647	Some idiots got together and thought, "oh yeah we're cool, let's start a band." Too bad they never woke up.	S/M
•			ex-glam rockers?		good music	POB 25520 Chicago, IL 60625	Occasionally the music tricks you by starting to sound promising, but it always manages to lapse into cheesy licks. The song "brontosaurus" was OK, but they didn't write it.	Lo
	•	even worse	optimism	not recommended for diabetics	Public Enemy	Primary recordings, 72 Spring Street, NY, NY 10012	My friend, Monster, e-mailed me a story written by some guy whose girlfriend made him dress up as Barney the Purple Dinosaur if and when he wanted to fuck her. Otherwise she was just not into it.	N
		•	Boys frm O.C. that R young, tattooed, "angry," & overly concerned w/ their facial hair.		Boy George	6607 Sunset Blvd. LA, CA 90028	You know when someone starts a story that you've heard a million times before and all you hear is blah, blah, blah... but you know when it's over so you can come back to reality and politely smile?	JJ
the singer has a long time ago	•	some of the guitar sounds banjo-y	aged rockabilly surf-punks	if ur an aged rockabilly surf-punk (who's drunk)	Selena	1209 Highland Ave Iowa City, IA 52290	A long, long time ago bands like The Sonics existed. Now Los Marauders exist as kind of a poor substitute. Not rock en Español, punk in English.	Lo

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

ARTIST	TITLE, FORMAT, LABEL	Record Report Card	Cover Art Grade	POPPY	HEAVY	PUNK RK	COLOR	FOOD	Totem Animal Spirit	sex act	Remind me of what TV show/movie/ book	friends w/ Wesley Willis
Los Mas Turbados	Recuerdos de Lactancia, CD, Grita	A-	B-	•		•	verde	tortas	perro moreno	chupa mi pito	Maria Mercedes	•
lower case	All destructive urges seem so perfect, CD, Amphetamine Reptile	D-	B-			•	vomit green	E coli	Roz of Christian Death	auto-erotic asphyxiation	Pee Wee's Playhouse	•
Luscious Jackson	Fever In, Fever Out, Grand Royal	C	D	•			lellow	pizza (fold in half b4 eating)	Swan & Weasel	when girl 1st discovers her own pussy	cagney & lacey	•
Magnapop	Rubbing Doesn't Help, CD, Priority	A	C	•			abalone	Jelly beans	kitten, of course	ear licking	a sad zoom	•
Maids of Gravity	The First Seond, CD, Vernon Yard	B+	N/A	•			tawny	lobster bisque	black labradour	toe sucking	Studs	•
Matchbox 20	Yourself Or Someone Like You, CD, Lava	D-	D				rotten egg yellow	Vienna sausage, sardines, saurkraut, pig's feet, head cheese	vulture being eaten by a vulture	masturbation to video of a rodeo while wearing rubber gloves	ALF	•
Mazzy Star	Among My Swan, CD, Capitol	A	B		•		sunset	warm	Nico	tantric	Blue Velvet	•
Mekons	The Edge of the World, CD, Quarterstick	C	B+	•			rhinestone	KFC & marshmellows	that puppet lamb & Talking Heads	anal with barnyard animals	Three's Company	•
Miss Murgatroid	Myoclyonic Melodies, CD, Win	D+	B				resin	rasberries	mole	child molestation	horror genre	•
Mondo Topless	Fifty Thousand Dollar Hand Job, CD, 360 Twist!	C	C+				sunshine yellow	jelly bellies	Jim Morrison	Holding Hands	Partridge Family	•
Nerdy Girl	Twist Her, CD, No Life	C	D	•			off-white	Tofu	pigeon	1st base	Friends	•
Neurosis	Through Silver in Blood, CD, Relapse	C+	B-		•		darkness	anything bloody	footservants of Satan	soft cannablism	Oprah	•
New Bomb Turks, The	Scared Straight, CD, Epitaph	B	B+			a bit	violet	licorice	wombat	Rosie Palm		•
New Wave Hookers	Dare Tit-list Fuzzed Aircunt, Van do Ass Loud Least LP, G-Punkt	A	B	•		•	lemon	ju-ju-bes	fox	D.P.	public acess porn show	•
Nick Cave	Murder Ballads, CD, Reprise	A	B				midnight blue	linguini with sautaed mushrooms	bat &/or penguin	in the ocean at night	gothic	•
Nico	Camera Obscura, CD, Beggars Banquet	C	B-	•	•		dull glitter	vodka	syringe	postmortem	Wild Palms	•
Nothing Doll	Big Happy Record, CD, Pox	B-	A+				green & orange striped	lollipops	lab mouse	yabyum		•
Pansy Division	For Those About To Suck Cock, 7", Lookout	B	B-	•	•		purple and gold zig-zag	choc. cake	garden snake	consensual sodomy	My Own Private Idaho	•
Party of One	Wind-up Machine, 7", Prospective	C+	D+				sky blue	mashed potatoes	monkey playing drums	auto-eroticism	a cartoon one	•
Princess Superstar	Strictly Platinum, CD, 5th Beetle	A	B+				pretty in pink	chinese take-out	a mink coat	holding hands	Good Times	•

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

Obviously signed pact w/ devil	At Least Can Play	(Might B) Better w/ banjo	GIMMICK	(Might B) good live	Their polar Opposite	Address	Once Upon a Time...	REVIEWER
el diablo	•	•	produced by a guy in NOFX	•	snoop dog	c/Marcos Pena Royo 35 70g; 33013 Oviedo, Asturias, Spain	Si mueves asi la cuna, me vas a despertar al chamaco.	Lo
pact pending		•	still searching	better un-dead	Brandy	2645 1st Ave. S., Minneapolis , MN, 55408	I'm way tortured, man. I mean like the pain rips through my soul, sears my heart & all I can do is scream, scream, scream in agony & anger. Just like everybody else I know.	N
		•	unique not shy E. Coast white girl hip-pop	•		NY train to Atwater	...when something slowed down, fell out of gear, lost track, started repeating itself... luckily the keyboards R magical despite it. After 1st 4 horrors u can relax & get down, get groove (4 the most part). Previous releases cruise wider.	d
	•		none	sure	ZZ Top	PO Box 93595 LA CA 90093	The story has the following elements: dancing in a thunderstorm, the wafting smell of nylon jacket like 1 worn by your 1st love, talcum powder, flannel, best friends 4 life, 80 mph w/ the windows open, giggling, crying, a lemonade stand.	AA
no	yes	no	produced by John Cale	they are!	Red Krayola	104 w. 29th street, 4th floor, ny 10001	It was late & there we were in the desert, a flat tire, running out of water, R clothes in tatters & a million miles frm nowhere. Fortunately, we still had our car stereo, & until the battery rebelled, we grooved to the magicaltunes of theMaids	AA
•			Country Whitney Counting Crowes cowboy boot tight jeans thing		KISS	c/o Atlantic Recording Co., 75 Rockefeller Plaza NYC,NY 10019		JJ
•	•		aural contact high	yes, but better in bed	Motley Crue	call information for Capitol Records	Now it's quiet, as if vacated by a swarm of wasps. You see that your protests have no effect. You're too deeply aware of the futility of trying to control it. It hovers over you, as you shiver in the shadowed shine of an eclipsed star.	N
	•	already tried	fiddles	yes, but don't wear anything furry	Esquivel	Po Box 25342, Chicago, IL, 60625	I'm gonna hire a wino, to decorate our home. So you'll be more at ease here, you won't need to roam.	N
•		or any additional instruments	all gloomster accordian all the time	nonono	They Might Be Giants	POB 26811 Los Angeles, CA 90026	Someone decided to vent all of their pain and sorrow by attacking a set of bagpipes and record this on a CD to make everybody else suffer too. "Misanthropic Moil Music" pretty much says it all.	Lo
			Vox Continental	At A Bat Mitzvah	Black Sabbath	POBox 9369 Denver, CO 80209		JJ
	•	•	50/50 gender split		Marilyn Manson	Pico & 4th Ave	Mediocrity became a sought-after commidity; the world was never the same.	C
gleefully	•	never	girl plays cello	•	Donovan	PO Box 251 Millersville PA 17551	There was a latenight ritualslaughter(in the graveyard, hohum) pigeons,cats,the usual suspects. This tale ends w/nothing supernatural: the cops came & we got in the paper. Tho there's nothin new/radical bout deathmetal, it still sends shivers up the spine	AA
quite possibly	really fast	•	guy rock	if you like to get hurt	lawn bowling	POB 82192 Columbus, OH 43202	A guy named Larry made a zine called Genetic Disorder. 1 day he got to go to Columbus, OH & drink beer (his favorite thing to do) w/ his favorite band. Then he saw them play in Long Beach, got injured in the pit, & died happy. The End.	Lo
		•	songs about porn stars and drugs	yes	Amy Grant	Germany, or $10 to M. Brotsky POBox 49984 Austin TX 78765	There's nothin more precious to a German punker than English expletives.In a tiny club in the former East on the eve of der fuhrer's birthday, I took a picture w/ a flash camera in hopes I could see what the pitch black bathroom had looked like.	AA
in a beautiful way			dark and moody	very good live	born again Christians	3300 Warner blvd. Burbank CA 91505-4694	Nick and a few of his friends: Kylie Minogue, P.J. Harvey and an already fucked up Shane MacGowan got together and had murder on there minds. While they planned out the acts, they drank some good wine, got a bit drunk and decided to sing about it instead.	S
Nico IS the devil	•	•	dead lead singer	only in hell	Blind Melon	England somewhere	Another rainy day in hell. I forget my umbrella and think of Nietzche's opium and you.	N
•	•				speed metal	POB 4137 Ithaca, NY 14852	There once was a girl who didn't really care for dreamy music; it just wasn't her cup of tea. If it did happen to be your beverage of choice, drink up this album.	Lo
judging by the back cover, yes			consensual sodomy	•	the right wing	POB 11374 Berkeley, CA 94712	Bands with overt themes are always a good thing. Pearlescent vinyl disk comes with a pornographic Beavis and Butthead sticker wearing Pansy Division T-shirts.	Lo
can't tell	can't tell		apathy		mambo	can't tell	A band decided to record (possibly on a 4-track) a song that sounded like an old experimental soundtrack that starts off sad, but leaves you with a warm, fuzzy feeling inside.	Lo
	good 'nuff	actually OK without one	White girl raps	•		POB 7034 Windsor, Ontario Canada N9C3Y6	Well boys and girls, sometimes when you pick out an album strictly because you like the band name, it pays off!	Lo

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

ARTIST	TITLE, FORMAT, LABEL	Record Report Card	Cover Art Grade	POPPY	HEAVY	PUNK RK	COLOR	FOOD	Totem Animal Spirit	sex act	Remind me of what TV show/movie/ book	friends w/ Wesley Willis
Pure	Generation 6-pack , CD, Mammoth	A-	B+	•	•		worn suede brown	tequila-soaked ice cubes	playboy bunny	oral	Kenneth Anger's Scorpio Rising & The Wonder Years	•
Red Aunts, The	Saltbox, CD, Epitaph	C	C				silver	watermellon	anteater	blow job in the bathroom		•
Republica	CD, RCA	F	F	•			Pink	Binaca breath spray	drop kick dog	repression	Oprah	•
Salt	Auscultate, CD, Island	A	B-	•			white	snacks	civet	the who;e nine yards	Brinkly	•
Sam Philips	Omnipop, CD, Virgin	C-	B+				chrome	french bread	Grover	"not tonight honey, I have a headache."	Roseanne	•
Saturnine	Flags for Unknown Territories, CD, Dirt Records	B	N/A	•			Pale Yellow	Chicken Soup	Meow	cuddling	something on public acess	•
Sauce	Cake Bake Disaster, CD, Hardtail	n/a	B	•	•	•	red, white & blue	egg, water, flour, & lotsa sugar!	fake cashmere	clumsy	andy griffith & ShaNaNa	•
Sea and Cake, The	Nassau, CD, Thrill Jockey	D	D	•			bleak	sprouts	Golden Retreiver	premature ejaculation	M*A*S*H	•
Shake Appeal	My Danger, 7", Deep Elm	C-	D	almost			drab grey	cashew nuts			one where you don't pay attention	•
Sinsation	Pig, CD, Nothing/Interscope	F	F		•		gray pupon mustard yellow	puked up meat	wild boar	doggy style	Newest Crow: City of Angels	•
Skinny Puppy	Process, CD, American	A	B		•		red	veg hand roll sushi	hyeena	bondage on Mr. Toad's wild ride	Doom Generation	•
Skinny Puppy	Selections from BRAP, CD, Nettwerk	B	N/A		•		blue	eggplant parmason with mushrooms and spinach inside	chimpanzee	sex on the batman ride	Faces of Death	•
Spdfgh	Leave Me Like This, CD, Dirt	C	N/A	•			leopard print	choc. brownie non-fat frozen yogurt	cat eye glasses	only with boyfriend	Party Girl	•
Speed MQueen	[self-titled], CD, Necessary	D	C	•	•		black	chilly	leopard	fucking	[new] Romeo & Juliet	•
Stiff Little Fingers	Get a Life, CD, Taang! Records	F-	F+	•			kelly green	corned beef and cabbage	dinosaur	yawning	CNN	•
Subsonics	Everything Is Falling Apart, CD, Get Hip	B--	C-				cal trans orange	bomb pop	Ganesha	threesome	Bedknobs and Broomsticks	•
Suckerpunch	[self-titled], CD, 510	B	N/A	•	•	•	red	meat and potatoes	Schaferhund	boy on boy	90210	•
Super Junky Monkey	Parasitic People, CD, Tristar Music	B-	B		•	•	acid yellow	mouthful of Wasabi	Tasmanian Devil	S&M	Texas Chainsaw Massacre	•
Tear Garden	to be an angel blind, the crippled soul divide, CD, Nettwerk	D	N/A				grey	Tailfood	Sloth	good at first, but he just won't cum	Liquid Sky	•

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

Obviously signed pact w/ devil	At Least Can Play	(Might B) Better w/ banjo	GIMMICK	(Might B) good live	Their polar Opposite	Address	Once Upon a Time...	REVIEWER
	•	unlikely	no hockey refrences	definately	Cyndi Lauper	101 B Street, Carrboro, NC, 27510	She was such a beautiful girl, and he wanted to tell her, but knew if he did he would no longer think she was so beautiful, so he said nothing. Just sighed.	N
still in line	getting better	•	punky chicks	entertaining anyway		1608 N. Cahuenga Blvd. #332 LA, CA 90028	If I was a punky chick who was in a band, I'd want to sound like this (if we couldn't sound like The Lunachicks). The last song was my fave.	Lo
•			could be good in aerobics class		Amorphis	Rise Management PO Box 9877 London W10 5WN	They're English and they suck. Good thing the Mayflower left when it did.	AA
	•	•	They're Swedes	•	Salt 'n' Pepa	Island Records, a PolyGram Co 825 Eight Ave. NYC, NY 10019	I went on a date with this guy. I hated everything he worshipped – '70s disco, dark rooms, vertically striped sweaters. He loved Salt, said he couldn't pry it off his turntable. I expected it to be crap. I was shocked.	AA
		•				338 N. Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, CA 90210	I agree with the better living through plastics ideal, but one nice sentiment does not justify a whole album.	Lo
no	yes	no	bastard brothers of R.E.M.	yes	The Beastie Boys	Knickerbocker station, Box 1053 NY NY 10002-9998	A lazy explorer in a canoe came to shore and decided to take a nap. When he awoke, he was surprised to find that the natives had prepared a platter of indigenous fruits and delicacies, so our hero decided to stay forever and live happily ever after.	AA
yup	•	•	always	better u bet	Shaquille O'neal	PO Box 1616, San Pedro, CA 90733-1616	...there was Queen & Devo & the Buggles & the Kinks & B52s & LA country band w/ two Dil bros, & Ween, & the Muppets, & Popdefect & the Germs ...& they could only dream about making cake with Sauce.	d
yes	not	anything might help	indie rock version of Grateful Dead (did someone say Phish?)	no thank you	Sepultura	none given	I was trapped in an artists' colony in Berlin w/ 5 pairs of underwear, 2 cameras, 1 book, & a Skynyrd cassette for that extra blast of Americana to keep me sane. The roommate, a painter, had different ideas about what makes our country great	AA
might help		definately	they could use one			POB 1965 NYC, NY 10156	Nothing horrible; nothing horribly original.	Lo
yes, on the devil's worst day			a band		carmel apple w/ nuts	10900 Wilshire blvd. suite1230 Los Angeles, CA 90024	I was really, REALLY bored and annoyed, so I turned off the CD player and a miracle happened: I smiled.	S/M
			good industrial	definatly	boredom	500 W.Olive suite 1550 Burbank, CA 91505-4628	A girl walked naked along the sands of the beach. The wind and the water were ferocious, but she was calm. While the outside world was self destructing a beautiful peacefulness and contentness washed over her. Despite everything, she felt good	S
on a day the devil was feeling good			good industrial	hell yeah	a calm stream	632 Broadway, suite 301 NYC, NY. U.S.A.10016	There was a band who took some qualudes just as they were about to record an album. Hours went by when they abrubtly awoke right before the seventh song.	S/M
	•	•	retro vintage	yes, if they don't wear panties	KISS	Knickerbocker station , box 1053, NY, NY 10002-9998	None of her friends, or even strangers for that matter, could believe she picked up that blue leather pea-coat with the red polyester fur puffs on the collar and sleeves for only $3.	N
	•		Friendly		Mazzy Star	Sunset Strip	I was really high and heard this, but upon listening again while sober, I realized it wasn't what I thought it was.	C
should have	•	no way	Irish	•	G.G. Allen	706 ismo CT San Diego, CA 92109	Had a TotalCrush on a borderlinepunker.He gave me a SLFtape.I listnd 2it so oftn, knew every word.Thot maybe he luvd me. Maybe I was attractd to anger.When wuldn't fuckhim, hedumpedme.Regret the whole episode.& having 2review thisCD. Nostalgiacan'tpayrent	AA
	•	•	chick drummer	!	The Ronettes	POB 666 Canonsburg, PA 15317	My friends Gloria and Mike love this band when they go see 'em live, but even they think that this CD was horribly recorded and makes the singer sound like a nasal twerp.	Lo
•	•	•	sensitive, thoughtful, punk rock	•	stage fear	510 Records (no address given)	SWF, 17 ISO pnk. rk. astroboy, 16-20, big spikey hair, impervious attitude, smelly socks (I'll wash 'em for you), chains around your ankles. I have camo streaked hair, a soft belly, and a bottomless heart.	AA
•	•	no way	tiny Jap girls w/large sound	amazing, must see	Pizzicato Five	79 Fifth Avenue, Ny, NY, 10003	When the emergency medical team pulled the gerbil out of his bloody asshole, Jim whimpered, "See, would any of you have expected that something this cute could be so ferocious?"	N
					amusement park	632 Broadway, suite 301 NYC, NY. U.S.A.10016	A band started playing some good sounding music. After the 4th song they did some acid. Sang a few more songs. Smoked some pot. Sang again. Then wandered over to a new age store & sang till they got kicked out 4 giving the other customers headaches.	S

Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

ARTIST	TITLE, FORMAT, LABEL	Record Report Card	Cover Art Grade	POPPY	HEAVY	PUNK RK	COLOR	FOOD	Totem Animal Spirit	sex act	Remind me of what TV show/movie/ book	friends w/ Wesley Willis
V/A	Girls Town, Motion Picture Soundtrack, CD, Mercury	A-	A-	•	•		Chanel's Vamp lipstick	extra sauce	LL Cool J	unprotected	Girls Town	•
V/A	Shugg Vs. Cockpit: A Bittersweet Team-Up Of Bands, Double CD, Bittersweet	B	B+	•	•	•	black and blue	Hungry Man TV Dinner	Underdog	carpet munching	WonderTwin Powers... Activate!	•
V/A	Scooch Pooch Records Plays: Their Original Sins, CD, Scooch Pooch	A	B+			•	Burnt Umber	hot shots & red hots	Chupacabras	Unprotected anal sex	Evol Kineval/ CHiPs/ anything with motorcycles...	•
Versus	Secret Swingers, CD, Caroline	C	A-	•			zebra striped	cool whip	rabbit's foot	anal w/ strap-on	Fat Albert	•
Vinnie & the Stardusters	Girl From Ipanema Wants to Kill Me, 7", Ultramodern	A--	A+	•			orange, brown, 'n white Hawaiian print	Pineapple Quesadilla	hyper-active peeing puppy	thumb wrestling	The Ruttles	•
White Trash Debutantes	It's Raw But You Live For It, CD, Two-O-Six	A	C+			in a way	peachy-creamy	is booze considered food?		kissing in the hall on Halloween	Twin Peaks	•
Yatsura	We Are Yatsura, CD, Primary	A	B-	•			Rust	French Fries	rug rat	going to the record store	Beavis & Butthead	•

I goofed & there's extra space here again... I hate when that happens. NO WHITE SPACE IN MY MAGAZINE!

izes it's not just cause his sound's cut out. A 16 year old was skateboarding in the street out front and forgot to look left, right, and left again. Legs probably broken. Ambulance on its way. He'll live. Show must go on.

Next to me an alterna-homegirl and her alterna-homeboy are slow jammin' as "Comeback Thursday" starts up, and this girl's singing it in my ear like Whitney Houston. The luxury of a not too crowded night at Jabberjaw is its living room feel, but having only a few people grinding into your personal space is sometimes more personally annoying then just simply being sucked up into a large mass – 'cause I wouldn't want all these people in my living room. So I close my eyes; oh yeah, I'd forgotten, it's smooth again. I glide along the contours of the sound. I stop my own monotonous noise and let theirs envelope me. It changes the flow of my blood, the tension in my muscles, feel of my skin. This is what loving a band is all about. I open my eyes and it's gone in a flash and I don't find it again that evening. And then the show is prematurely over. But it's enough for me to know it exists; and that we have the time, and tenacity, for this relationship to flourish. And that it's exactly the kind of one-sided relationship I've been looking for. –darby (President, Chokebore Fan Club)

* Now that I'm the Pres. and I've got the indide scoop, don't dis my boys for their name change cause the real story is they switched 'cause they felt like it, and came up with it all by themselves!

LUNACHICKS & **REVEREND HORTON HEAT** @ the Palace
When two of your absolute favorite bands play together, it's hard not to turn into a puddle of fan-girl drool. A double bill so fabulous that it's hard to pick who to adore more. The Lunachicks win for best make-up, best sparkley outfits, and best legs, but it's a tie for slickest performance. There are those who yearn for the days when these bands played intimate little clubs without the flashy stage shows, but when I go to The Palace, I *like* to see a show, darnit. The rest of the pompadour sporting, wifebeater-clad audience didn't seem to be complaining either, and were in fact diggin' all of the rockin' songs the Lunachicks played from their forthcoming album, "Pretty Ugly" (due out in February), and were enthralled for the Reverend's entire swingin' two hour set which came complete with cheesy light show. Whoever thought that modern day hipsters would be listening to cowboy music sang by a lecherous alcoholic in a spangley 1950s dinner jacket? (Lorraine)

VELOURIA @ Jack's Sugar Shack
When my friends and I stumbled upon Jack's thinking Negro Problem were playing and they were but we waited and waited and waited through Velouria's set, drinking our money away in exotic tropical concoctions. It didn't make it better though, and we wrote our review on a cocktail napkin which we passed around as we waited: Went from band in "The Thing You Do" for the girls to being krocker 4 the boys. They should grow their hair and play sunset 1987 with Motorcycle Boy but that's for like 30 seconds in each song, there's 4 different styles in each song but they don't always go together. The minute you thought they were doing something good it would suddenly be horrible. The music isn't penetrating anyone but themselves. They would be better if homeless 4 a year. I like how they all have glasses. Excellent band. (Today is opposite day.) Velouria is 2 or 3 brothers harmonizing. My friend's all hated it but I didn't hate it or anything. (Lisa AA)

CITIZEN FISH, SCHLONG
So they've played here five times since the tour for their first album. Oh. I must have been snoozing and losing. But maybe it was just that after record #2, which didn't pack the same kinda wallop, I didn't go wacky for the band. Cause Citizen Fish's first release was one of those go-down-in-history kind of records. Along with Operation Ivy, one of the best punk-ska infusions our time will ever know. Really! And Dick, from the Subhumans days, has got one of the all-time best punk rock voices. Anyway, today they're like a [redacted] shot back in time, when I first saw them so many years ago.

I have nothing to add about Schlong, since they played at like dinner time, except that if you still haven't heard the *Punk Side Story*, out on Hopeless Records, you need to make a point to. One of the boys in the band said that the composer's daughter wrote them and told them she liked the record and wasn't going to sue them. (darby)

LISA CARVER performed solo @ Amok but who knew? No one, since the store was told the book publisher would handle publicity, and didn't. Not even a mention in the LA Weekly! Only the few Amok regulars who picked up a flyer, plus a few friends and devoted psychic fans. Which still equaled 30 or so, though the small store would have easily been packed. Lisa didn't read from her new book, instead she had upon the wall images that represented chapters in her book: Anna Nicole Smith, Tonya Harding, Killer Bears, Lawrence Welk.... Lisa Carver + Audience participation = juggling, sexy Judith Krantz reading, disturbed book store browsers, foreigners who are forced to French kiss in the name of Foreign Relations (and obsessive Scorpionic curiosity).

Lisa's a good date, so after her event we went to catch **HADDA BROOKS** @ the Viper Room celebrate her birthday and watched Ms. Brooks play vixen and shake her caboose. In a spiraling state of sleeplessness we caught **EL VEZ** performing @ downtown's California Plaza the day after. We rode the Angels' Flight up and were razzle dazzled by the flamboyant extravaganza – as were all the local old folks, mostly Asians, who came out to witness and revel with this Mexican Elvis in all his Hispanic glory. Check out those wild-fire girl El Vettes (Lisa Maria & Preselita) who were equally essential to the show as the king.

Aron's Records somehow kept an in-store performance by **THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS** super low key – by fluke did we even end up there. With only 50 others max (probably all Aron's employees & friends of employees) it was a nice homey look at this smart regular-Joe quirk-pop band. Other worthwhile shows witnessed: **NEW BOMB TURKS!!!, SOUTH BAY SURFERS**, **WESLEY WILLIS, BOBSLED, WUS**. There were also a bunch of really great bands who played at some of our zine events this summer, like **CHINCHILLAS, THE MAKE-UP, THE WARMERS, DITCH CROAKER, CHROME CRANKS, JONATHAN FIRE*EATER, CONGO NORVELL**, and others all written about in the *KillZine Zine* (see pg 51).

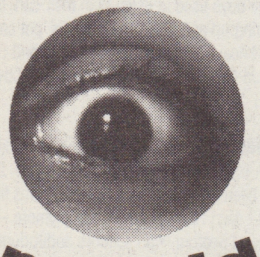
Ben Is Dead Music Reviews #28

Obviously signed pact w/ devil	At Least Can Play	(Might B) Better w/ banjo	GIMMICK	(Might B) good live	Their polar Opposite	Address	Once Upon a Time...	REVIEWER
	•		having the guts 2 call this much fierceness – girls	yes, rent the video		825 Eighth Street NYC, NY 10019	He went to see this movie with his girlfriend and afterwards, borrowed a pen from the concession stand dude to write, "lili taylor rules" above the urinal on the Men's room wall.	N
	•		Girl band	•	Pee Wee Herman	920 Broadway Ste. 1403, Nyc, NY 10010		JJ
•	•		punk rawk	•	Shirley Temple	323 Broadway Ave.#405 Seattle, WA 98102		JJ
	•	•	singer sounds like girl then boy	yes, if drunk	Soundgarden	104 West 29th Street, NY, NY, 10001	Perplexed about what shoes he should wear w/ his new leather pants tonight, the executive's assistant transcribes the tape of the conference call w/ Laura Dern, not missing a single 1 of her numerous exclamations of,"that's great."	N
someone else signed in their place	•	already has similar-sounding instruments	old songs, new lyrics	•	WASH	Ultramodern 2217 Nicollet Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55404	The only reason she liked him was because he had more floral/Hawaiian print shirts than anyone else in the whole wide world.	Lo
•	•		why stop at just one?	hope to find out soon	nice girls	8314 Greenwood Ave. North suite 102Seattle, WA 98103	This album could've been recorded better, but I'm a sucker for bands who sing about pop-culture emersion and who watch as much (if not more) TV as I do. They sing the praises of Susan Lucci to those of the Kennedys. It's fun to kiss'n'tell.	Lo
•	•	•	They're not Japanese	•	Bach	Primary Recordings 72 Spring Street NYC, NY 10012	I got my right hand in a cast and I can't type. I could play drums in your pseudo-Jap indie band though. I'll bang the tamborine til you stangle me with it. Maybe we could "talk it out" before it gets to that, though.	AA

Reviewers are: Lorraine (Lo), Cliff (C), Selina (S), Selina & Michelle Haines (S/M), Jessica Jones (JJ), Lisa Anne Auerbach (AA), Nina Blake (N), Darby (D)

There's over 100 more CDs I set aside to review, yet astrologically and logically speaking it just wasn't going to happen. Too many! You may find reviews appearing on our web site, as we ellaborate on it. Oh, and Cliff wanted to mention a few good albums not reviewed: Smog "Doctor Came at Dawn"; Chavez "Ride the Fader"; Bennet "So You're Not Comming Over"; Various "Think Link"; Ditch Croaker "Shortwave"; Marci Hall Trio "Greatest Hits" (of course)

bad



ronald

T-SHIRTS

"Almost as frightening as the movie"-Darby

Send $12.00 (checks made out to Janet Flemer) to:

Flemertown 2711 18th St. #23 San Francisco, CA 94110

black only specify large or XL

NewsRadio

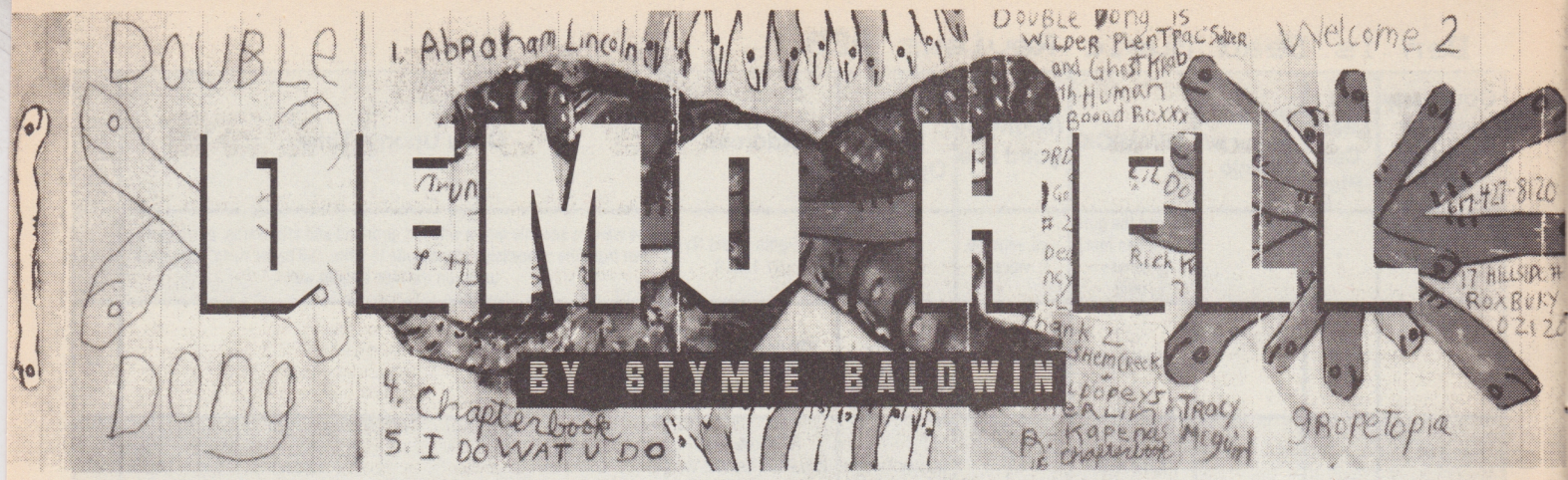
MUST SEE TO BELIEVE!!

THE ZINE!

BETTER THAN THE I HATE BRENDA NEWSLETTER!

The behind the scenes of this intelligent yet seemingly innocent TV show is brewing with scandals and other miscellaneous things they want kept secret. Now read about all the gory details in the new tabloid zine: "No News Is Good NewsRadio".

Only $3 p.p.d. to PO Box 3365, Hollywood, CA 90078



DEMO HELL

BY STYMIE BALDWIN

I can't win, I tell ya! Two issues ago in my first demo column I made a lot of noise about how I'm not the sort of fire-breathing asshole critic who gets his kicks from giving mean reviews to all the sad garage bands who send me their stuff. I tried to be as kind as possible last time, I really did, but that just wasn't good enough for you little creeps, was it? To judge by mail, you'd think I was the most evil punk-rock ballbuster on two feet; I got these letters taking me to task for all the harsh, insensitive, hurtful things I said. Well, I just want everybody who took the time to write in to know that I've given each of your letters careful consideration, and, after many sleepless nights and a lot of soul searching, I've at last come to the conclusion that as far as I'm concerned each and every one of you can just go french kiss your own anus. That's it, I've had it; from here on in, you send your precious demos to me at your own risk. No more Mister Nice Stymie! Anyway, on to the slaughter...

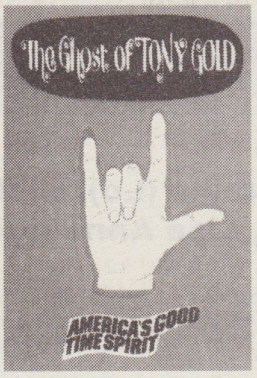
REAL EYES: To get things rolling, let's all give a big shout-out to this fun-lovin' pair of New York hippie girlies, here making their second appearance in Demo Hell. I don't really like the music on this tape any better than I liked their last batch of patchy psychedelic tunes, but they continue to show potential and I like their experimental spirit. Besides, they didn't spend their cover letter bitching about the so-so review I gave them last time. All you angry punk rock puppies out there could learn a thing or two about manners from these gals. Ok, so I'm still nursing a grudge from the introduction. So, sue me. (C/O Kusten. 2235 Emmons Ave., #2 Brooklyn Ny, 11235)

THE GHOST OF TONY GOLD, *America's Good Time Spirit:* These guys have no business showing up in Demo Hell. They're way too good! Fun but sort've eerie music that sounds like it's from three or four different decades at once. I wish my descriptive powers could do them justice, but the best I can come up with is that they sort of make me think of the Kinks back when they were good. The singer could stand another week or two working on his Do-re-mi's, but if this band was on the radio every twenty minutes instead of No Doubt, then I'd be a much happier Stymie. (POB: 398056 Inman Square, Cambridge, MA, 02139.)

CONDESCENDENCE: A one-man Industrial band featuring Neil (no last names, please), a clever, not-completely-untalented 23-year-old Michigander. Neil employs his skills with a drum machine, keyboards, tape loops and a guitar to craft the sort of tinny tunes that fill out the soundtracks of sword & sorcery CD-rom games or direct-to-video horror movies, which is probably exactly the sort of stuff he'll be doing in a year or two. (23790 Crisler #2, Taylor, Michigan, 48180.)

THE BUGS: I don't know what the hell this thing is. It starts off with a few very good songs in the vein of early '60s Beatles, then it briefly turns into a poorly produced and extremely confusing college radio show, then it becomes a lengthy and fascinating interview with two aged, witty queers who were once members of a band called the Bugs (apparently the group we heard up front), but who have since fallen on hard times. I don't have a clue if this is a brilliant concept album or just a tape of odds and ends about some actual early '60s band, but it's great stuff either way. I found this tape floating around in my mailbag with no address or anything else to indicate how you could get yourself a copy, but if the people who sent me this thing happen to see this column they should send me their address, care of this magazine, and I'll give 'em a proper hype-job next time around. This one's a beaut.

BLERT: I sort of like this band's name, but the actual music itself is so boring it almost made me cry. Come to think of it, a lot of bands with sort-of-intriguing names are really tedious when you actually sit down to listen to them. Big Head Todd and the Monsters, Toad the Wet Sprocket, Echo and the Bunnymen, and, of course, The Grateful Dead. I guess these bands use up so much energy coming up with a nifty name that they don't have any left to make their music with. It's a theory, anyway. (violet music, contact Dan at (415) 776-1591.)



MIKE REP AND THE QUOTAS, *A Tree Trunk named Desire:* One of the worst demo tapes I've ever heard, but also, every now and then, one of the best. Very very Velvet Undergroundish, in the sense that every song is either a pretentious, unlistenable mess, or it's great but it just goes on and on until it makes your brain hurt. An absolutely weird mix of art-noise, Bo Diddley-esque blues, country, Blade Runner soundtrack music, super-catchy Monkees-style pop, sickly-sweet John Denveresque warbling, more art noise, and even a not-bad novelty song right out of Dr. Demento. Please note the false ending on side two, which must feature the longest block of silence I've ever heard between what you THINK is the last song and the REAL last song. So, can I recommend you send away for this tape? Well, no... Wait, I mean yes! Oh, I don't know, damn it! It's much too awful to recommend, but it's also much too good to ignore. Just send away for the thing and make up your own mind for once, ok? (Anyway Records, POB: 82444, Coulumbus, Ohio. 43202.)

REAL MINX: I'm slowly learning not to tell anybody I meet that I write for Ben Is Dead, because the people I DO tell invariably get this crazy gleam in their eyes and say, "Really? Well hey, I just happen to be in this band, and I got our tape right here in my pocket, and..." That's basically the story of how I got this tape here; a little intern chick at my job gave it to me, and now if I don't review the thing I'll have an enemy for life. Well, at least I'm not in the awkward position of telling you her band is terrible, but I must say that it's just really not my cup of Ne-hi. Oh, I suppose they're nifty enough if you're ga-ga over that raw-Orange-County-punk-rock-girl-band sort of thing, but if they threw in a couple of songs with a slightly different flavor it would really help to break up the monotony. Can't say I love it, can't say I hate it. It just sort of exists. (Contact Allie at 714/960-0431.)

DOUBLE DONG: Stupid, stupid, stupid, but I like it. Two Massachusetts boys going by the snappy nicknames of Wilder 'Plentpac' Seltzer and Ghost Crab the Human Bread Boxxx go crazy with a one-track tape recorder. The Result? Genius! One of them whoops and hollers out the silly lyrics, while the other one wheezes asthmatically and makes popping noises (A-la the Fat Boys) until he just about passes out. Double Dong makes me think of the idiotic tapes me and my friends used to make in the bathroom when were about 10 years old. These guys never gave it up, and they just got better and better at it. (17 Hillside, #2, Roxbury MA, 02120.)

IT'S ME, MARGARET: I listened to this tape two days ago, and now all I can remember about it is that A) This band sounds very professional (in a generic, alternative rocky sort of way), and B) When she tries to get all husky and tough the lead singer sounds a little like Bart Simpson's best pal Milhouse. Your money and stamps would be better spent elsewhere. (Leslie or Paula, 818/506-2993.)

DJ LOVE GROVE, *Moonrise Over Daydream Farm:* An "ambient interlude" that's even more dreadful than the name would lead you to believe. Really, really painful to listen to. DJ Love Grove twiddles the knobs of a synthesizer in the foreground, while far off in the distance birdies chirp and froggies croak. I stuck it out until the sitars came in, and then I just couldn't stand it anymore. This sort of thing cuts right into me like a surgeon's scalpel. (Booking info 410/675-4409, or lovegrov@clark.net)

PARACHUTE: Oh-so-'70s, but in a bad way. A bunch of electric guitars played with fuzzy proficiency, for what it's worth. Sort of like an extended solo at a Rush concert, except the singer never shows up and it just stays a solo all the way through. The kind of stuff teenage boys used to listen to in their dark little rooms, their heads bobbing up and down rhythmically, pot smoke thick in the air. I haven't heard it's like in a long while, and I can't say as I've missed it..(Ja-cas! Records, 8432 Fox Creek Cove, Germantown, TN, 38138.)

JIM MICHAELS, *20 Years:* This poor guy's cover letter sends chills down my spine; "High. well here it is – 20 years. Hard 2 believe I've been at it that long. It was the drums first, then the guitar. too bad I don't have that drum set anymore – It was smashed on the stage of Seaford High school's auditorium around '79-'80. too bad I don't have that puke green les paul anymore. If that guitar would talk, It would have had a lot to say... A lot has happened since '75. Punk Rock, hardcore. MTV killed music for a large part of the '80s. That's when I went back to my psychedelic roots. The '90s came along with grunge & opened doors. Music was back. the computers died. So here it is: '20 years' my first solo project since 'Funnies.'" As if that's not pitiful enough, he includes a page of jokey fake blurbs like ""it certainly seems to be going places'-a local travel agency." I wish I could tell you that this tape is the work of an eccentric, neglected genius, but the heartbreaking truth of the matter is that while Jim's songs show some potential, they still have a ways to go. I suppose I could leave it at that, but what the hell; I hereby grant 20 Years the Demo Hell Seal of Approval. This guy's obviously paid his dues; it's time for fame! (Jim Michaels, 93 Hamilton ave., Massapequ, NY, 11758.)

Zine Reviews In One Sentence Or Less

+ books & comix

by: Nina (N), Lisa Anne Auerbach (AA), Lorraine (Lo), Darby (d), Jack Often (JO), Cousin Ken (K), Evan (E).

ZAP! (Zinesters Against Plagiarism), $2, c/o Sky Ryan (Skank Girl), POB 1242, Sherwood, OR 97140. "*Sex is*... when I just do what I'm told to do; ...an attempt to make him like me; embarrassing when he touches my stomach and I have to suck in all my fat flesh;...the only time he ever uses terms of endearment;" + more intelligence and insights. (d)

Your Flesh #34, $4.95, POB 583264, Minneapolis, MN 55458-3264. The articles aren't as good as usual (except the Hernandez Bros.) but there are still shitloads of reviews of movies, books, comics, music, and other stuff which is what has always made this thing anyway. (E)

Young Bug #1, $2.95, c/o Mike Kenny (Zoo Arsonist Press), POB 6322 San Pedro, CA 90734; [rkurthy@csulb.edu]. Sardonic and clever, this comic delivers a refreshing dose of intelligence and compassion in an atypical story of girl meets bug...put that fucking bug spray down – you're going to hurt someone! (JO)

You Sank My Battleship #2, $?, c/o Tina Shaft, 822 Guilford Ave. #141, Baltimore, MD 21202. If you're lonely and have nothing more pressing to do, why not publish your own zine (these guys did, so you could just read theirs instead) sometimes being productive is its own reward. (Lo)

WW3 Illustrated #24, $3.50, POB 20271, Tompkins Square Station, NYC, NY 10009. The theme this time is "Prisons", and as usual it's packed with stories, comics, and info – some very interesting ones by prisoners illustrating how fucked the prison system is. (E)

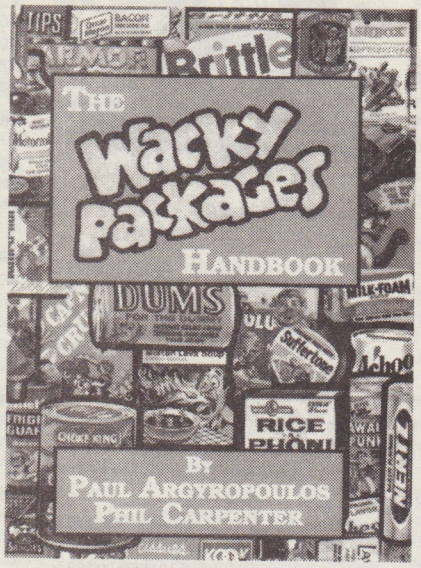
WORST OF BOILED ANGEL, by Mike Diana, $16.95, Michael Hunt Publishing, POB 226, Bensenville, IL 60106. Thank Satan that someone decided to reissue the sickness of Mr. Diana for the people who heard about all the trouble that he got into the first time around with these but never saw what the hell they were talking about. (E)

WIG (Women in General) #2, $4, POB 158, Heber City, UT 84032. A Slick Art/Music/Sport/Culture mag w/the F-generation (females) in mind; interviews w/Lunachicks, snowboarding grrls, Kim Gordon, etc. (JO)

White Buffalo Gazette $3, "Kool Man Falls From Grace", Maximum Traffic, POB 2452 Butler PA 16008. Stories, comics 'n' stuff aplenty that's all handwritten with "good" art. (K)

We Aren't the World #7, $2, 2208 N. 72nd St., Wauwatosa, WI 53213. Young girl zine which repeatedly states they are riot-grrls and why, and how Green Day are still okay, and reminds me of the confines of my first issue – though this is actually better. (d)

Wandromedia #8, $?, c/o Wendy, 1927 Hennepin Ave #3, Minneapolis, MN 55405. Autobiographical comics that if I were sitting at a bus stop and found this while waiting, I'd bring it on board and continue reading. (Lo)



Wacky Packages Handbook by Paul Argyropoulos and Phil Carpenter. Yes, this zine-sized handbook includes everything the Wacky Pack collector ever wanted to know and more including: History, Price Guides, Scarcity, Die Cuts, Checklists, Copyrights, Sticker backings, Cloth Patches, Canadian Issue, Fun Packs, Boxes, Wrappers...with some full color glossy reproductions in the middle; no address, but look for it at your local comic book store or try 805/665-9015. (d)

Very Vicky Junior Hepcat Funbook, write for catalogue, c/o Meet Danny Ocean, POB 383 286, Cambridge, MA 02238. "Cocktail Culture" - boozy comics that almost (but not quite) live up to that fabulous title. (Lo)

Upstate #7, $2, c/o David Palmer, 283 Betsinger Road, Sherrill, NY 13461-1208; [upstate@dreamscape.com]. Artsy zine from Canada with an attitude; they don't care what I think. (K)

Unskinny #7, send chocolate or booze, c/o Lucy Sweet Top Flat, 9, Athole Gardens, Hillhead, Glasgow, G12 9AZ England; [aps30015@uk.ac.paisley]. Various fun (albeit difficult to read) – comics about the absurdity of clothes, boys, chocolate, liquor, and rockstars that all takes place in England - yummy! (Lo)

Underwater 5, by Chester Brown, Drawn & Quarterly, 5550 Jeanne Mance St. #16, Montreal, Que. H2V 4K6, Canada. You know, when I read Chester's work he seems so far from the image I have of him from the work of his comic friends Seth and Joe Matt; "Underwater 5" just adds to his alien genius, which isn't enjoyable in a usual comic book way – but I especially like the letters section he inspires. (d)

Top Shelf #3, $5 US/ $6.75 Can, c/o Primal Groove Press POB 15125 Portland, OR 97293-5125. Comics and illustrations, some of which are even worth reading and very artful indeed. (Lo)

Tomorrow Magazine #14, $13/3 issues, c/o Tim Brown, POB 148486 Chicago, IL 60614-8486; [audrelv@tezcat.com]. 20 pages of poetry...'nuff said. (K)

The Casual Observer: A Bedroom Guide to the Darkroom Log, 10¢ + 2 stamps, c/o Auerbach, 2800 E. Observatory Road, LA, CA 90027. Okay all you Griffith Park Observatory fans out there, this is what you've all been waiting for!, a monthly guide to the Observatories' Darkroom Logs, with photos included, starring yet again our own Lisa AA with her pal Benjamin; it's only 10¢ if you find it at Amok, or hey, make a day trip to the observatory and get it straight from the source. (d)

Ten Things Jesus Wants You To Know #14, Send 2 stamps, 1407 NE 45th St. #17 Seattle, WA 98105. NOMEANSNO, Zeni Geva and others are interviewed in this punk zine that's one half advertisement, one half dairy by-product. (JO)

Temp Slave #8, $?, POB 8284, Madison, WI 53708-8284. An anal probe into the shady, cavernous world of temping complete w/plenty o' monkey wrench in 'ze machine stories, poetry & comics by disgruntled temps – cheap advice... jack it in forever tonight, or shut your mouth and pretend you enjoy it. (JO)

Taste it!, $?, 9 N. 7th St. POB 121, Mpls, Mn 55403. Politically-tinged humor aimed at easy targets – Rush Limbaugh, Japanese racism, etc., typical post *MTV* on the late tip "Jackie Chan is best" stuff and trekkie nonsense. (JO)

Tart #2, $2.95, Eros Comix. One of the best x-rated comics, *Tart* is a story of a horny nymphet which takes the waif look to ludicrous extremes; unfortunately number two has a little more skin on our star slut but it's almost as good as Tart #1. (d)

Tailspins #27, $3, POB 1860, Evanston, IL 60204; [tailspin@interacess.com]. Another punk rock zine with features on Bigfoot, Guns, Gas Huffer, Boys Life... that is just (and always has been) OK, but not ever achieving greatness mostly due to the writing which states the obvious in a sort of high-school essay way. (E)

SWAC, #5, c/o McDonald, POB 7064, Berkeley, CA 94707. Youthful hodge-podge of poetry and writing done by women attending Albany High which is not only sweet but smart. (d)

Super Slam #1, $3, c/o Stacie & Rhonda, POB 1242, Sherwood, OR 97140. Glittered construction paper cover containing Xeroxed slam book... *so* voyeuristic. (Lo)

Strength #4, $3.50, 5050 Section Ave., Cincinati, OH 45212; [strength@iglou.com]. Boarders of all persuasions – as in surf, snow or skate, not gender or sexual preference because this mag is strictly dudecore – working up a homoerotic sweat over their manly strength...gotta love it. (N)

Stories & Drawings by Madeleine Fix $?, 296 Northwood Ave., Colombus, OH 93201. A journey into the world of the artist naïve with jr. high style drawings and stories w/enough "cute cat" crap to make you want to saw your own foot off...no sir I don't like it. (JO)

Stain #10, $3, POB 2501, Phila, PA 19147-2501. Wrestling and rock connect in this zine which highlights some confederate megalomaniac fat ass telling the whole world how he invented punk rock and hardcore and all that...read *American Legion* instead, it's funnier. (JO)

Spy vs. Spy, $?, c/o Agent '72, POB 21566, Washington, D.C. 20009-9566. Lots of good top secret stuff in here, also a Kim Gordon interview and John Zorn's favorite band Cakelike. (K)

Spitting Image #1, $5.50 $10/2 issues, c/o Julie Solis, POB 931435, Los Angeles, CA 90093. Focus on children's sexuality in poetry and prose; good cover and well written considering. (K)

Sonar Map #1, send 2 stamps, POB 25243, Eugene, OR 97402. [eleg_sci@efn.org]. A typical I hate coffee, I love aliens, I hate MTV, Green Day, Rancid etc. zine that would do better ignoring all that crap...bitch,bitch,bitch. (JO)

Snowflake, $5, Smart Art Press, Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Ave, Santa Monica, CA 90404. From the snow-infatuated mind of our own Lisa Anne Auerbach, Snowflake's lovely layout and imagery (minus gross photo pg 4) equals one of the most visually appealing zines out there and proves artistes always figure out a way to afford white space; when my grandma looked at it she said "What kind of mind comes up with stuff like this...The print is too small...I'm not going to damage my eyes over this crap" – would you?!? (d)

Smack Dab #5, $2, c/o Heidi & Leslie, POB 633, Metairie, Los Angeles, CA 70004. Before I begin, let

it be known that I am a big Redd Kross fan, I would even venture to say bigger than most so I'm not trying to bag and can see the appeal, *however*, though the actual writing and musical taste in this fanzine is not what I'd consider horrible, the authors (pictured throughout grinning next to "celebrities") are drooling groupies to the point of insipidness; my best friend and I outgrew this stage at age 16, and we guarantee that one day the girls behind this endeavor will be horribly embarrassed about all this (though perhaps not as they're already in their '20s...) – either way it's entertaining. (Lo)

Single Guy Zine #8, $1, c/o Ryan Bigge, 11623 90th Ave., Delta, B.C. V4C-3H5 Canada; [rbigge@sfu.ca]. I can't imagine why he's still single, I guess Canadian girls just don't appreciate tall, blond, witty, erudite, goofy, bitter, glasses-wearing-hunk writers. (Lo)

Shake #1, $3.50, c/o Jason, POB 14781, Chicago, IL 60614. Attempting to cash in on alternative culture from all angles: Robert Crumb, Hugh Hefner, Keanu

We have tried to review as many small press publications as possible over the years. In case you're never one of them, please take satisfaction in the fact that all the zines we receive here do not get thrown away. Instead we've helped start a zine library at UCLA & every six

Reeves, Jawbreaker + poor fashion layouts in Urban Outfitters clothing. (Lo)

Sauce $1, POB 3505 Oakland, CA 94609. Two comic writers/artists/alcoholics take a blurry eyed stab at the subject they know best – alcohol…maybe they should stick to drinking instead. (JO)

RTFM (Read the Fucking Manual) #1, $?, PO Box 10254, Rockville, MD 20849. Think this is old, but already started writing it up so will just say it's 90% reviews with much care to the point certain sections are covered in white-out which makes it like a scratch game. (d)

Roctober Comics and Music #16, $3, 1507 E. 53rd St. #617 Chicago, IL 60615. Garage/punk/surf zine exploring the obscure/gray areas of original '60s punk, bizarre defunct local TV programming…monkeys, midgets and masked r'n'rollers abound w/lots of comics & style, to quote – "Most primates look cool playing rock music." (JO)

Resistor #1 inside your heart, $3, c/o Evelyn McDonnell, PO Box 1479 NYC, NY 10276-1479. This zine has various and sundry tales along with a particularly enlightening article about tampons. (K)

Rank Culture #3, $3, 2016 Green St. 3R, Philadelphia, PA 19130. Poetry and prose – "None of which seems relevant." (JO)

Quarter Inch Squares #4, $?, c/o LaLa, POB 80606, Minneapolis, MN 55408-8606. The Barbie Manipulation Issue – I showed this to my mom and she showed it to her friends; what a great theme! (Lo)

Punk Lust #16, $1, 2418 Western Ave., Seattle, WA 98121-1322. A self-proclaimed "militant queer gothic punk transvestite publication" that reviews bands and offers "artwork" of said genre - um, er, I liked the Hebrew subtitles. (Lo)

Pucker Up #2, $5US/$6Can w/signed age statement, c/o Tristan Taormino, Black Dog Productions, POB 4108, Grand Central Station NYC, NY 10163. [BlckDog@aol.com]. Poly-sexual eroti-core (and, oh yeah, good writing to boot). (K)

Princess #2 $2 c/o Francesca 175 5th Ave suite 2416 NYC, NY 10010 [prinsss@aol.com]. Overall very glam + adorable illustrations of sexy chicks in Jewish Star necklaces; about half of the articles are really swellegant, just skip the other half. (Lo)

Potato Mummy #1, $2.95, c/o Bob Kurthy (Zoo Arsonist Press), POB 6322 San Pedro, CA 90734; [rkurthy@csulb.edu]. The world's drunkest super hero, trapped in an undead body that won't die, Potato Mummy punches and drunk drives his way through your bowels like shit on fire. (JO)

Pop Nausaea $3, c/o Brien Heinz, POBox 45956, LA, CA 90045. Interviews (bands, filmmakers), reviews, some fiction, and misc. funky stuff. (AA)

Pool of Sick #4, $1, c/o Otto, POB 684496, Austin, TX 78768; [pos@mail.utexas.edu]. A zine by definition: covers all bases from a pop-subcultural viewpoint [not again]; especially liked the article on La Lucha Libre. (Lo)

Plotz #6, $?, c/o Barbara, POB 819, Stuyvesant Station, NYC, NY 10009; [plotz@pipeline.com]. Pretty much covers all aspects of Jewish life from anti-Semitic episodes in day-to-day life to bands that have cute Jewish members, and it even comes with **Plotz Lite** - a mini niche-zine that's a handy pocket Yiddish-to-go guide. (Lo)

Pink Pages #8, $2/$3 overseas, c/o Joe Maynard, POB 879, NY, NY 10021. All about sex, wanting it and doing it…includes some good pictures so thoughtfully provided for those who can't get any. (K)

Perfect Being #1, $3.50, c/o Larry A. Franks, POB 14663, Spokane, WA 92214. A spoof magazine? It's kind of like getting *Cracked* when you wanted *MAD*. (K)

Perezvon Plays Dead #2, $2, c/o Daniel, 219 1st Ave, North #C Seattle, WA 98109. Way top much stuff about coffee. (Lo)

Palindromist $6/yr, POB 471258, San Fran, CA 94147. Though this small journal doesn't actually read the same backwards and forwards, its enthusiastic use of word play and solidly researched articles are wacky and obsessive. (AA)

Ovaltine Fanzine #1, send 2 stamps, c/o Miles Donovan, 117 Fairmont Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19123. Such a cute little punker zine, we might be looking at the next **Genetic Disorder** if he keeps at it. (Lo)

Oculus Magazine vol. 5, #5, send 2 stamps, POB 148, Hoboken, NJ 07030. A straightforward zine w/ reviews, interviews, etc., the best thing being the price. (JO)

Nothing: The Newsletter For Seinfeld Fans Vol 2, #4, $2 ($3 Can), c/o Greg Gattuso, 65-17 242nd St., Apt. 2B, Douglaston, NY 11362-1979; [seinfan@aol.com]. More than I ever wanted to know about the *Seinfeld* universe. (K)

Nancy's Magazine #13, $4, POB 02108, Columbus, OH 43202. Because of its cute illustrations and quirky creative layout, reading this would be something entertaining for those days when you just don't have the stomach for pretentiousness - some of the art so refreshing that it doesn't matter what the articles are about; you could even share this with your 5-year-old daughter, and how many zines can you say that about? (Lo)

Mr. Density #7, $2, c/o Brocktoon & Generic Mike, POB 172, Westview Station Binghamton, NY 13905-0172; [mrdensity@aol.com]. If ever anyone was worthy of having a fanzine dedicated to him (if not an entire religion), "his crispiness" Crispin Hellion Glover is definitely the man (though this zine discerningly recognizes His Divinity as well). (Lo)

Monozine 2 relapse $1, POB 598, Reisterstownm, MD 21136. Various writers detail the various ailments and sicknesses they've experienced, kind of the way old people do, sitting around comparing gall stone circumferences and tumor weights…if you're bored and sick you might like it. (JO)

Mole #9, $3.50, POB 2482, Merrifield, VA 22116. Whirligig's, harps, comix, and space reviews = okay zine. (d)

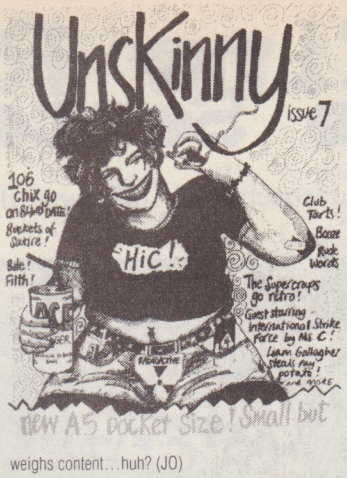
Metal Fest Magazine $?, POB 226, Bensenville, IL 60106. Questionable DIY abortion advice plus lots of articles and interviews featuring all the great, energetic heroes of extreme metal. (AA)

Maxine #2, $3, 2025 W. Augusta, Chicago, IL 60622; [MaxineChi@aol.com]. The *Ambition* Issue: powerful, positive, pro-female prose accompanied by rants, raves, and reviews - "a literate companion for churlish girls and rakish women". (Lo)

Manga Power Plus Issue, c/o Tokion magazine. Pornography for those that find the realistic sheen of raw flesh penetrating a swollen mound of matted pubic hair a tad too obvious, manga in general offers worlds of fantasies that real people would never consent to live out and Manga, this little newsprint zine, continues this ancient Japanese tradition. (N)

Lumpen Times vol. 5, #4, c/o Ed Marszewski, 2558 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago, IL 60647; [nodes@Lumpen.com]. Entertainment for the masses (leftist undertones throughout), a magazine that gives its readers credit for being intelligent; it's good to know that there are actually people out there concerned for the future of humankind. (Lo)

Lucky $2, 4303 Fremont Ave. N. Mnplis, MN 55412. A messy comic trip into a bitter, tortured mind where form out-



weighs content…huh? (JO)

Lollipop #31, $2, POB 147 Boston, MA 02123. Something this sweet and sticky always makes for a worthwhile suck, I didn't get past the first few pages without laughing way too loud at Lex Maörburger's "Liquor Lecture" and then again near the back of the zine at editor Scott Hefflon's "Blackout Rationalizations" – a must read for any aspiring alcoholics. (N)

LIPS #1, $1, c/o Moreea, 4009 S.E. 48th, Portland, OR 97206. Sweet, innocent first issue with zine reviews, young poetry, and other fanzine-like behavior. (d)

Left Wing 2-in-1 $1.50, c/o Amy, POB 14072 Portland, OR 97293-0072. Great drawings/adventures of people who have Xeroxed pictures of confectionery for heads, eat yer heart out. (Lo)

Kool Man: The Amazing Story of Robert Dupree #1 & only, $7, (address same as **Craphound**). This is a superb example of zine-world obsessive-compulsive behavior on both the part of the fanzine editor and his subject matter, which in this case has turned itself into a fascinating insight into both psychotic geniuses = a must own. (d)

Karma Lapel $?, c/o Heath Row, POB 441915, Somerville, MA 02144. Soap Opera-esque journal entries: I felt guilty snooping in someone else's diary, so I didn't really read it. (Lo)

Junkmagnet #5, $2.50, c/o Nicholas Freeman, POB 11501, Berkeley, CA 94712-2501; [junkmagnet@aol.com]. A documentary photo exhibit replete with whimsical prose, this issue dedicated to Richmond (San Francisco). (Lo)

Junk #3, $1.50/trade, 204 E. Morris #1, Modesto, CA 95354. Killer little geekzine with cool comics and stuff about *Star Wars*. (K)

Journal of Ride Theory #2, $2, POB 2044, Portland, OR 97208-2044. This issue has a great article about the death of the People Mover (RIP). (K)

J. Cruelty #4, $2.50, c/o Erik Farseth, 1450 Sheldon St., St. Paul, MN 55108. Stories, politics, plus random interviews/reviews/articles; covering numerous socially-conscious topics – too numerous to even try to mention in a one line review but I'll just say this is the last issue b4 they change their name to *Rock, Scissors, Clocks* and become less cynical or so they say. (d)

Instant, POB 2224, Woburn, MA 01888-0324. Instant review – another rock band zine…so what. (JO)

Inspector #2, $6.95, c/o Raphael Middleman, 1739 38th Ave., San Fran, CA 94122; [artman@slip.net]. An interesting magazine that's been around for awhile that deals with many facets of visual/written arts; the quality of material and presentation are top notch. (E)

insight, The sunny side of life magazine #16, $3, POB 125, Farmington, MI 48332; [www.rust.net/insight]. If America is hungry for Beavis and Butthead, then it is no doubt starving for Insight…so stupid it's scary. (N)

Innovative Plagiarism #7 (last issue). Mid-'90s-punk-scene zine by a bunch of So. Cal high school kids – oh I can't even start. (N)

Icarus Was Right #2, $2, POB 191175, San Diego, CA 92159; [IcarusWas@aol.com]. A zine just for riot grrls and boiz with an emphasis on the political (Fugazi, Bar Codes, etc.)…remember what happened to that kid Icarus? good luck, just don't get too close to the microwave. (JO)

Horny Biker Slut #10, $?, Last Gasp POB 410067 SF, CA 94141-0067. The name says it all; this comic stinks of cum, filth and bad artwork (but that's its appeal)…more cocks and balls then Tom of Finland…more cum shots then a gang bang…file under 'books for the sexually repressed.' (JO)

Hollywood Highball #2, $6, c/o Jeff Fox, POB 85771, Hollywood, CA 90072; [ag844@lafn.org]. Manly parody of manly bachelor magazines with new exciting topics like cars, booze, and tits (almost); with a nice layout (much superior to issue #1) and bang-up writing to match (but where's the beaver!!!). (d)

Hello, Sailor #1, $2, 207 Sullivan St. #5, NY, NY 10012. A nicely wrapped mag with: interviews of Stereolab, Silkworm, Fuzzy; decent in-depth record reviews (except *how* could they like that new Everything But the Girl release?); a Jersey Shore travel guide, and fantasies of *Love Boat's* Isaac. (d)

Happy Fag $10/yr, c/o Scooter, 323 Broadway East #902, Seattle, WA 98102. Very cheerful zine full of tips and tidbits about well adjusted homosexuals. (AA)

Grindstone #5, $2.50, c/o Cameron, 11288 Ventura Blvd #761, Studio City, CA 91604. All the hip swing/lounge/rockabilly bandwagonry articles and fab '50s-style layout replete with vintage clothing store ads; kind of like the movie *Swingers*, it's all stuff I dig in moderate doses, but when presented this way, by people who're *way* too caught up in the whole scene, makes me cringe. (Lo)

Graymatter #1, $3, 18215 SE 23rd St. Vancouver, WA 98683; [USMYRDFG@IBMMAIL.COM]. An upstart zine by some boring Oingo Boingo fan that drones on and on and on…you get the picture. (JO)

Gravee #4, $2/issue $7/4 issue sub, c/o Tina Cassini & Cristina Una, POB 80541, Mpls, MN 55408. Fun little zine the size of a CD dripping with cartoons, stories, and band reviews with an additional Gravee mini-zine at no extra charge. (K)

Going Inside #1, $?, c/o Busdriver Jeff Grimes, The Art Therapy/Fine Arts Discovery Program Camarillo State Hospital and Developmental Center, 1878 Lewis Rd, Camarillo, CA 93102. Poetry (as art therapy) written by patients of Camarillo State Hospital; edited by our first Killzine Tour driver. (Lo)

Glyph $?, 117 E. Louisa #253 Seattle, WA. 98102. This rag features comics, fiction and poetry with an dare I say "underground" feel to it, some contributions seem to be *Love & Rockets* wannabes, some are genuinely good, but over all fairly interesting and well done. (JO)

Genetic Disorder #666, $3, POB 15237, San Diego, CA 92175. Satan Satan Satan. (d)

Gas/Food/Lodging #1, $1, 625 SW 10th suite 493, Portland, OR 97205; [Tiana503@aol.com]. I never got past the title – which sucks. (JO)

Future Generation ("For Homes Like Yours with Little Folks"), #6, $1, P.O. Box 465, Fairfield, PA 17320. Met lovely editor China in Baltimore and we talked for awhile about her and her zine for punk rock parents – mostly compiled of articles from other magazines with features on rock 'n roll moms & dads, tips of the trade weaved throughout, and hand-colored by her and her kid; and hopefully there'll be a new issue out shortly so write her and find out. (d)

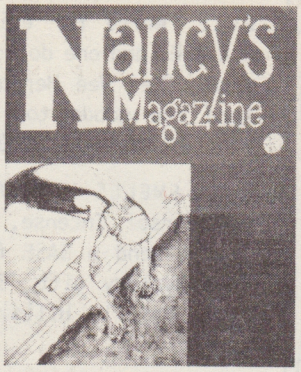
Funny Pages Installment one, $4, POB 15685, Sacramento, CA 95852-0685. This quarterly comic is full of puzzles, games, do it yourself 3D glasses and comics, comics, comics…heavy in parody, light in taste. (JO)

months all publications are given to them (minus my Cometbus' and Rollerderby's which I can't bear to part with). They keep it in a temperature controlled, archival environment and your zine has probably never received such wonderful care. If you wish to send them your

Fleener #1, $3, 1999 Ave of the Stars, Los Angeles, CA 90067. This comic is a psychedelic surf/tiki/natives-are-restless b/w trip complete with flying fish, surfing tikis and enough mumbo jumbo to make Rick Griffin give up god, and Gilligan shit his always white clean sailor-boy drawers. (JO)

Eye #6, $4, 153 E. Lindsay St #108, Greensboro, NC 27401-3007. This issue highlights zombies, heroin and prosthetic eyes (Crispin Glover where the hell are you?)...sounds good to me. (JO)

Drawn and Quarterly Vol 2 #4, $6.95, 5556 Jeanne Mance St. #16 Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2V 4K6. This slick and impressive comic reminds me of Heavy Metal w/out the alien T&A stuff, but with a more disjointed/"artsy" style...check it out. (JO)



Don't Shoot It's Only Comics vol 2 #1, $3, 140A Harvard Ave. #308, Allston, MA 02134. This comic anthology is uneven at best, some comics being superb, while others outright suck...maybe the editors could be a little more choosey. (JO)

Dishwasher #13 $.50 c/o Dishwasher Pete, POB 8213, Portland, OR 97207-8213. Engaging stories that romanticize dishwashing so enchantingly that I actually considered quitting *Ben Is Dead* to pursue a career in dishwashing (I got over it though, as my overflowing sink will attest to). (Lo)

Disappointed: The Human Condition, c/o Jeff Zenick, POB 877, Tallahassee, FL 32302. A journal of Jeff's life centered around his sucky job at a chemical plant, my heart bleeds for him. (K)

Demure Butchness #7, $3, c/o Timmer, POB 2049 Loop Station, Minneapolis, MN 55402. And you thought that gay boys from Minnesota were so nice, but "joke 'em if they can't take a fuck". (Lo)

Danzine #9, $2, c/o Teresa Dulche, 625 SW 10th Ave #233B, Portland, OR 97205; [danzine@habit.com]. Recommended for all females (or interested parties) in the exotic/adult line of work; a user-friendly socio-political industry rag written by, for, and about the girls themselves. (Lo)

Dagobert's Revenge, send 2 stamps, c/o Imogene Mutation (Exalted Grand Master), 2000 NE 42nd Ave suite 359, Portland, OR 97213. It's a good thing that there're those who're working to expose all of the conspiracies (or The One Big Conspiracy) behind everything from Masons/Shriners, Plantards, Kabala, Cartoons, UFOs, Knights of Malta, etc...opens with a quote from *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* if that tells you anything - indeed a most illuminating zine. (Lo)

Crime Wave U.S.A #5, $?, POB 675283 Manetta, GA 30067-0013. This zine steers clear of the typical fan boy format (thank god...yes lower case g) and tackles important issues: working the bar, ear wax, bad dates, Elvis' penis and Wesley Willis. (JO)

Creepy Mike's Omnibus of Fun $2, POB 983 Buffalo, NY 14213-0983. The nondescript "Creepy Mike" shares thoughts on records, comix, and (if you're nostalgic for retro hell) '70s snack food and TV shows, plus a few short interviews. (AA)

Creatum Sinistra #1, $4, c/o Joi & Kris, 175 5th Ave suite 2136 NYC, NY 10010; [sinistra@bway.net]. Zine for left-handed female Glenn Danzig fans who're into bondage stories, (yes, you read that correctly). (Lo)

Craphound #4, $5, c/o Sean Tej, POB 40373, Portland, OR 97240-0373. More cool, wacky clip-art of bait, devils, and clowns than you could ever hope or dream for. (Lo)

Cometbus #36, #37, $2.50, c/o BBT, POB 4279, Berkeley, CA 94704. Aaron is my hero and I truly treasure his existence; Cometbus = guaranteed belly laugh every time – sometimes I want to ride the wohl whip. (d)

Code #5, $3, c/o Lou R. Maxon, 2400 Westlake Ave N #21, Seattle, WA 98109; [codezine96@aol.com]. This mag has got to be losing money 'cause every page is glossy and thick and 90% of them're 4-color process, unless they have a sneaky friend at a printer's... the Job Issue focuses on work-type stuff of all kinds and is beautiful and readable and recommended. (E)

Clownhunter #2, $2, c/o Jim Schaefers, 946 NW Circle Blvd. #300, Corvalis, OR 97330; [jschaefers@aol.com]. Paranoid clownophobic fictitious musings. (Lo)

Chip's Closet Cleaner 11967, Chicago, IL 60611-0967 (http://virtumall.com/zines/chip/). Chip's a shrewd opportunist who knows how to make good zine out of dirty closets – and even though people give him shit for being an editor at *Playboy* he guffaws in their faces while creating one of the best zines around and I'm not going to try to fit in one line or less – the varied matter within but half of it inspired big belly laughs and deserves good bathroom placement for at least a week. (d)

Centipede #2, c/o Buddy, 273 Comstock Dr apt#B, Ventura, CA 93001. If the giving tree would kill your sister for you, I'd let it see me naked too - great story, wish more went into the illustrations. (Lo)

Can Control Graffiti #11, Blip Industry, $4, POB 61069, Seattle, WA 98121. Full-color kick-ass graffiti-art from around-the-world. (K)

Butterknife Junior #bum, $?, c/o Hilary, 129 Sugarplum Lane Benton, KY 42025. Lots of xeroxed drawings and visuals (good), some stories (good), poetry (not so good), and lots of nonsense about what it is to be riotpunk (bad); I guess living in Kentucky is a justifiable excuse for naiveté. (Lo)

Bust #7, $3, c/o Celina Hex & Betty Boob, POB 319, Ansonia Station NYC, NY 10023. Definitely the best of the chick zines, the Bad Girls Issue made me want to rent B movies, take up smoking, and revel in my vices. (Lo)

Bummers & Gummers #9, $2.50, POB 91, Lorane, OR 97451. "Quality bathroom reading since 1993" loaded w/ building plans, brake adjusting info, dumb animal stories, recipes, travel etc., kind of a Bob Villa meets *Anarchist Cookbook* sorta deal. (JO)

Blue Stocking #24, $3, c/o Judy Smith, 732 SW Third Ave #407, Portland, OR 97204. A lofty, intellectual look at Punk Feminism by Punk Feminists that's not all bad. (Lo)

Blink #13, $10/6 issues, c/o Fia DiMauro, POB 20043, West Village Sta. NYC, NY 10014; [blinkmag@aol.com]. Punk rock, fiction, art...a little bit of everything for today's alterna-youth. (K)

Black Sheets #9, $6, PO Box 31155, San Francisco, CA 94131; [BlackB@ios.com]. Written by sex-type writers and professionals, this issue's theme "Sex Work" gives a few tingles with strong writing but needs more photos. (d)

Bitch #2, $2.50, c/o Lisa Jervis, 3128 16th St. Box 201, San Fran, CA 94103. "A feminist response to Pop Culture" (talk shows, sitcoms, magazines,...) which is a bit academic, but gives food for thought and they use the word "fuck" a lot which makes it off limits to the puritan masses that no one really has anything in common with anyway; they condemn a lot of the things I would read in my sister's *Seventeen* magazines in the bathroom and classify as "stupid, weird, and bizarre," to which I must agree. (E)

Aquarium Town #3, $?, 1042A Guerrero St., SF, CA 94110; [jmwright@igc.apc.org]. One zine I was given on tour that really stands out: too short, but good stuff, my favorite being this small transcription of the editor sleep-talking to his "sweetie" about how she needs to sell ads for her non-existent "Safety" zine which is about – what else – cannons and muskets and sex! (d)

59¢, send 2 stamps, c/o Jam Records, POB 19806, Seattle, WA 98109. Teeny zine done by a couple people who like their "punk rock" and want to tell other people what they do and how they feel about things. (E)

BOOKS

The Sub, by Jimmy Jazz (Incommunicado Press) Remember all that shit you pulled on the poor sub that was unlucky enough to be assigned as your babysitter when your real teacher was tired of being responsible for your day to day to day socialization? What if that sub was recording all of the immaturity that you thought was *sooo* smooth all in purple neo-beatnik swirling jive with invisible beret-clad hepcats beating bongos in the background?

I'm currently at the age (a staggering 22 years) when some of my "punk" friends are actually undertaking this same sub job/life (frightening as that may seem), and for the life of me I can't figure out why they'd even want to deal with the hostile, unmanageable youth of today. Obviously they're much better individuals than I, or maybe, like Jimmy, they "just want to turn a few kids onto the ultimate jazz of life". A noble enough aspiration that I'm not compassionate enough to relate to, but this book was enchanting. Give it to me, daddy-o. (Lo)

The Field Guide to North American Males, by Marjorie Ingall (Owl Books)
This man-size field guide by ex-Sassy writer, Marjorie Ingall, is just what the casual boy-watcher or serious boy-pet lover needs – an exhaustive categorical breakdown of the various families and subspecies of boys with cleverly precise descriptions of their plumage, feeding and nesting habits, mating calls and courtship behavior. Not only will consulting this guide enable you to impress your friends with your new skill at correctly identifying the subtle differences between the "acerbic bipolar novelist (scientific name: burroughs kerouacum)" and the "bitter freeloading journalist (scientific name: steno conspirasus)" or spotting a "spiritual surfer dude (scientific name: mauna loa macadamius nuttum)" no where near a beach, but more importantly it will make you think twice if not completely dissuade you from trying to catch one of these totally predictable, stereotyped members of the boy kingdom and actually take him home. Better to just let them fly by and enjoy their humorous flight patterns. (N)

Rhino Presents: The Greatest Rock & Roll Stories by Art Fein (Rhino Books); **Rock Bottom, Dark Moments in Music Babylon** by Pamela Des Barres (St. Martin's Press)
So what if you could cut to the chase with everything. The world is overflowing with edited down versions of life, and now these sound bytes are starting to replace in-depth thought and experience to such a degree that people are accepting these fragmented bits as whole sums. Here we have two books (though there are an innumerable number of this style) whose design is to take the best pieces of "great" and "dark" moments of rock music history, cut out all of what they deem filler, and give you the punch line – and we have two totally different ways of going about it. Though I prefer Pamela's bedroom secrets (and other personal material) she is actually quite suited to this mainstream soul-searching, delving as deeply as space allots; her sort of rough, seemingly unedited writing style giving it a homey feel (unlike its awkward effect on the tearfully flawed *Take Another Little Piece of My Heart* – but not at all as magical as *I'm With the Band*). Pamela's zest for life is a healthy balance to the dreary life dramas, which display again and again, that only the truly twisted individual would trade in their life for fame and fortune (but we're still sorta glad they did 'cause it sure makes a good story). It's polar opposite, Rhino's *Greatest Rock and Roll Stories* is completely soulless, but the coffee table won't mind.

Seduced & Abandoned: Essays on Gay Men & Popular Music
Randomly dancing through the 40 essays compiled in *Seduced and Abandoned*, I had a hard time remembering I was not actually listening to a CD of Authoress Richard Smith crooning campily about cock rock, homocore, trannies, Kurt Cobain's tragically confused sexuality , Freddy Mercury, Suede and every other even-slightly-outted pop icon to a pulsating house beat, but just reading a book. Then when I played the book backwards (which is hell on your stereo because not only is it not on vinyl, but for some reason the book is rectangular), my delusion was further heightened by a psychic vision of Queen Richard lipsyching Diana Ross' "Love Hangover" into the big pop culture mirror on his wall and demanding to be told "who is the faggiest of them all?" No doubt girlfriend is getting the answer he rightly deserves. I mean, Miss Smith lets it be known with every word that leaves his pouty lips that he thinks pop music is "a bit like boys" and that's why he "just really, really loves it.". I mean, smell her, okay? *Snap, snap.*

Maybe I would have liked this book even more if it was a book produced only for queers, but Miss Smith sings to everyone by deftly emphasizing that the ambisexual vibe of pop music merely reflects the ambiguity intrinsic to sexuality in general – a theory which can help explain a lot of things and spare you the bother of trying to figure it out. Now I understand why I spent years of my life convinced I was a fag – not a fag hag or a drag hag but a fag in drag in my own right, thank you – and why like most fags, I lusted after straight boys who, I was convinced, were all really gay. That's right, I can blame it on that Madonna. (N)

Anarchist Farm, (III Publishing) Written by a doe aptly named Jane, you can easily imagine the plot of this tale which started off a little too slow for me to finish by press time – but I recommend checking out the anarchist/punk/death rock-ish works from III Publishing, especially *The Last Days of Christ the Vampire.* (d)

OTHER ZINES/BOOKS/COMICS WE'VE LACKED TIME TO REVIEW BUT RECOMMENDED: **Dancing Queen, A Lusty Look at the American Dream**, $12, by Lisa Crystal Carver, Owl Books; **It's a Good Life, If You Don't Weaken** (comic novel), by Seth; **Johnny the Homicidal Maniac** (comic), Slave Labor, (see interview in our web-only comic issue, out in June); **The Baffler**, $5, POB 378293, Chicago, IL 60637; **Art Babe**, by Jessica Abel, (note next issue will be released by Fantagraphics); **MAPS** Magazine (Multidisciplinary Association For Psychedelic Studies), 1801 Tippah Ave, Charlotte, NC 28205 or www.maps.org; **Shit Happy**, $2, by Adam Bregman, 11338 Joffre St., LA, CA 90049; **Punk Planet**, $2, POB 464, Chicago, IL 60690; **Guttersnipe Comix**, $4, Fantagraphics; **Girlfriends**, $5, 3415 Caesar Chavez #101, SF, CA 94110-9785 (who can help discover the lesbo in u – regardless); **.Green**, Personal Finance for the Unashamed, $3, 245 Eighth Ave. #286, NY, NY 10011; **The Bomb** (repressing of early 1900s anarchist violence novel by Frank Harris), $12.95, Feral House; **Animal Review** #13, $2, 3914 Brandywine St., Philadelphia, PA, 19104.

publication direct the address is: UCLA, attn: Brigette Kueppers, 408 Hilgard Ave., 22478 University Research Library, LA 90024. There are also a number of other zine libraries throughout the U.S. For a decent list check on our Killzine site: www.killzine.com

We mail mags by the tons;

a large enough percentage of them returned to us from the post office –stamped "box closed" or "forwarding order expired"– to inspire us to remind you: if u'r a subscriber & have recently moved that may explain why you are not reading this right now...or why you had to drag your ass into scary Borders to do so, & why you're steaming that your bulk mail copy still hasn't arrived. So let me remind ya'll one more time: you must send your change of address in when you move! If we have to resend your order we will deduct one off your sub since we don't get the magazine back, and we not only have to pay to get your new address, but we have to pay for postage to reship. The list is too long here to print all the returns we've gotten but we want to make it clear, we do our best to get orders out quickly & efficiently, etc. (except when we're off on a zine tour). In the meantime we got some returned death shirts we feel guilty about, since it took us so damn long to send them out: Joe Turner (KY), Ben Schlaver (NY), Mike Roe (LA), John Swope (CA) – let us know where you are now so we can rush these purty things to you.

Sumerian Legends

by Paul K

Ancient Sumerian legends tell of a fierce, nomadic tribe of brigands that was best known for the placement of large objects into the rectums of tribal leaders.

Originally, this skill was developed to aid in the theft of food, weapons, and livestock from other tribes. However, it quickly turned into a test of skill and manhood for the tribal shaman and chieftains.

A festival was organized to crown a tribal champion. One contestant traveled to Egypt and placed the Pyramid of Ramses the Great in his rectum, and another succeeded in inserting the entire Tower of Babel.

Not to be outdone, a third candidate announced that he could place an entire landmass in his rectum. According to the Sumerian legends, this accounts for the disappearance of Atlantis.

Paul K is the singer of the Imperial Butt Wizzards and gives good tea party.

Classifieds
$10/40 words

EVIL. Write for evil stickers. Send S.A.S.E. and one dollar or something in trade (Pee Wee Herman items a plus). Send the goods to: MCA, PO Box 843 Winchester, Mass 01890.

WHAT SMELLS LIKE FISH? Well Pisces of course! Incense, novelties, figs. Quick! Send a SASE for a catalog and free mystery gift. 369 S. Doheny Dr. #106, Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Happy fishin'.

THE KILLZINE ZINE, with the trials & tribulations of the recent all-zine road trip across the U.S.A. Ben, Bunnyhop, Genetic Disorder + more. Tour diary, "controversies", idiots, & other insipid musings. Send $2 cash or stamps to Killzine c/o Ben Is Dead, PO Box 3166, Hollywood, CA 90028.

SICK CARTOONS ON T-SHIRTS perfect for any occassion whatsoever. Send stamp for catalog to: Tom Lechner's Time Well Spent, 625 SW 10th, Suite 130B, Portland, OR 97205-2788.

GIANT SAND FANS: ¡Epiphany! has their exclusive "Bootleg Vol. 1" CD and "Drunken Bees" video documentary available through mailorder only. Very limited edition, so hurry. Call 800/899-DISC.

HIP HOP TAPES FROM THE UNDERGROUND. DJ Mix tapes. No radio played wack sh**. Send $10 + $3 S&H, check or M.O. Made payable to Salamani Music. S&H is free if you write Ben Is Phat! on the envelope. S.O.T.S. c/o Salamani Music, 369 S. Doheny Dr. #106, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

GARY CELEBRITY 4 SONG EP on cassette only. Mail $4 (payable to G. Jacoby) 2525 Tingley Dr. #212, S.W. Albuq, NM 87104.

TIRED OF WORSHIPPING UNGRATEFUL CELEBRITIES? Fight back! Join the only fan club devoted to the average guy and experience the pleasures of my uneventful life. Send $5.00 to: Keenan Pryor Fan Club, 10880 Standard Avenue, Lynwood, CA 90262.

BEN IS DEAD CATALOG available free with, send a S.A.S.E. to PO Box 3166, Hollywood, CA 90048

No deadbeat advertisers/distributors section this time. The list is getting so big my lawyer friend said he'd just help me sue everyone. See u on Judge Judy.

plexi

cheer up

SP 370 SUB POP LP/CD

SUB POP RECORDS: PO BOX 20645, SEATTLE, WA 98101
HTTP://WWW.SUBPOP.COM LOSER@SUBPOP.COM
1-800-SUBPOP1

PHOTO BY ROBERT SEBREE

CHAVEZ RIDE THE FADER

CHAVEZ RIDE THE FADER LP • CD • CS MATADOR RECORDS 676 BROADWAY NYC 10012
DIRECT MAIL ORDER ACTION: LP$8 CD$12 CS$7 POST PAID www.matador.recs.com